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Illustrations of Old Ipswich.

Illustrations

OF

OLD IPSWICH,

With Architectural Description of each subject and such Historical Notices as illustrate the Manners and Customs of previous ages in the old Borough, helping to form unpublished chapters in its history,

BY

JOHN GLYDE.

"I pray you—satisfy your mind,
With the memorials of the things of fame,
Which do renown this borough."

PUBLISHED BY

JOHN GLYDE, 35, ST. MATTHEW'S STREET, IPSWICH.

1889.

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PREFACE.

THE Volume now completed illustrates "Old Ipswich" in a way never before attempted. Each building has been made as far as possible to tell its own story, and to illustrate by its historical associations the manners and customs of former ages, as well as the social changes which have occurred. Sketches of the most picturesque objects assist the text, and the result it is hoped is a trustworthy contribution to local history.

It was not practicable to give an illustration of every building in the town as to which there was something interesting to tell. Only those were selected which caught the eye of the artist, of the antiquary, and of the lover of the picturesque. The French process of Photogravure, which happily combines the accuracy of the photograph and the delicacy of the engraving, was adopted in order that *fac similes* of the drawings might be given and the permanence of the steel plate secured. Convinced that cheap art is out of place in illustrating books of this character, no pains have been spared to make the plates representative of the highest stage of the art.

The Volume owes its origin in this way. The Author having for many years been a collector of the drawings of George Frost, and others, of buildings in Ipswich in times gone by, was urged by friends, whose regard for the sketches was as warm as his own, and who thought the time was come for an illustrated work on Ipswich, to publish copies of the drawings he had in his possession, and thus bring before the present generation the Ipswich of their forefathers. The Author resolved to risk the outlay, and has the satisfaction of knowing that such journals as "The Times," "The Daily News," "The Athenæum," "The Building News," and the local newspapers commended the project, both in its aim and in its execution.

The Author cannot conclude without heartily thanking many friends for their kind assistance during the three years he has been engaged in publishing "Old Ipswich." His obligations are especially due to Professor Skeat, the greatest Anglo-Saxon scholar of the age, to Lord John Hervey, Rev. W. E. Layton, Mr. Henry Clement Casley, Mr. Benjamin Page Grimsey, who have given him the benefit of their local knowledge, and have occasionally verified his statements; and to Mr. E. W. Harvey Piper, Assoc. S.A., who aided in the architectural descriptions. He has also to express his indebtedness to Mr. H. M. Jackaman for the loan of MSS., by the late Mr. William Batley, who was for several years Town Clerk of this Borough.

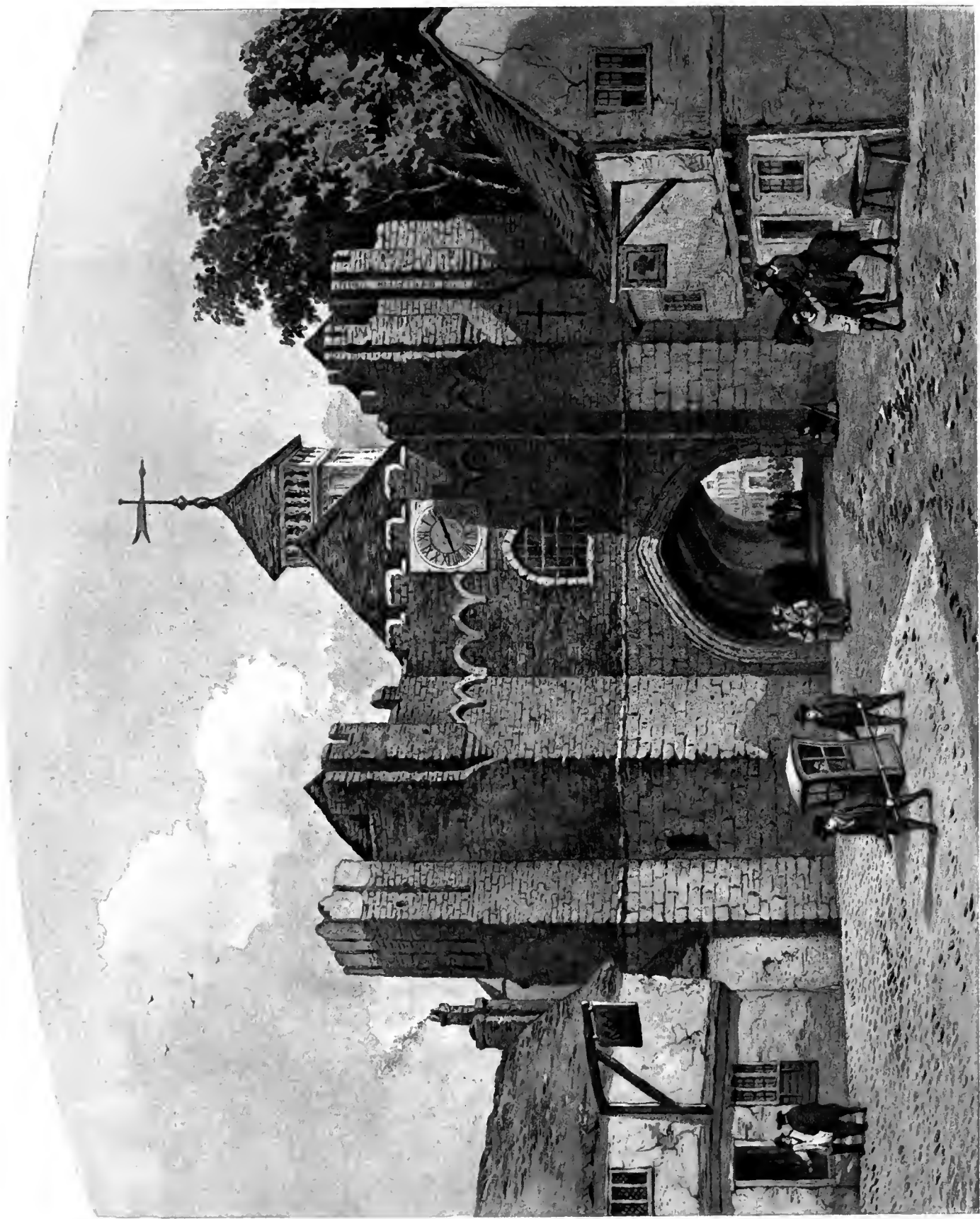
Ipswich, March, 1889.

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The West Gate.

Illustrations of Old Ipswich.

THE GATES AND WALLS.



IN these peaceful times we can hardly realize the necessity for fortifying a town like Ipswich. We hear of "walls," "ramparts," and "gates," and very much besides is left to the imagination. If, however, we go back to Mediæval times, good warrant will be found for fortifications even in so small a place as Ipswich. The Danes, in their descents upon the Suffolk coast, sailed up the Orwell, landed a body of men, sacked the town, and retired before an adequate force could be brought to bear upon them. The last record we have of such pillage is in the years 991 and 1000, when they broke down the fortifications. These were subsequently re-erected, and we may be sure that the experience of pillage and massacre fired the inhabitants with zeal enough so to fortify their town as to enable them to repel an attack. Experience of this kind is not thrown away upon a self-reliant people. We look back upon the work of our ancestors with curious solicitude, perhaps with ill-concealed credulity. But those stormy days not only contributed chapters to history, but they helped to knit more closely the fibre of Englishmen. A people created in storms are not likely to prove craven cowards. The Danes could not continue their predatory visits for ever; as their courage weakened, the confidence of the people of this town increased. As fate would have it, they had to grapple with a foe native to the soil. There is record of King John having caused a ditch to be cut and a wall to be made, which, doubtless, was a re-erection of the old ramparts. At all events, we have in the gates (such as the Bar Gates at Southampton and at York, and the gates here at Ipswich) the best possible evidence of the lamentable state of insecurity by which our forefathers were embarrassed in those good old times, when the Curfew tolled every evening at eight o'clock.

At this distance of time, when nearly all the marks of its existence are removed, it is extremely difficult to trace the exact line of the defences made by order of King John in 1203. That it was extensive and costly work is evidenced by the fact that the inhabitants of Cambridgeshire, as well as those of Suffolk, were compelled to contribute towards the outlay. Bacon's Annals throw little light on the question as to the material used in the construction of these walls, but various incidental notices given by him at a later date offer strong evidence in proof that the ramparts or walls, raised as we have seen in a turbulent age, by order of the most tyrannical of English kings, were built of earth rather than of stone. He shows that, in the course of two or three centuries, common soil on and in connection with these defensive works had been granted by the Corporation to so many persons that in February, 1554, the Burgesses ordered that these persons shall, at their own expense, cast up and repair such portions of the Town Walls and Ditches as adjoined the ground that had been granted to them. In 1603 the walls were cast up, gravelled, and impaled; and in 1643, when civil war raged, the Burgesses ordered breastworks and fortifications to be made about the Town, "and the Treasurer shall provid immediately 50 or 60 croudbarrowes or handbarrowes and Baskets." In all probability the wall consisted of broad earthworks, with an outer ditch and strong entrance gateways. This idea is confirmed by the fact that in 1303, just a century after the wall was built, a "parcell of the Towne ditches" was granted to Robert

Joyliffe at the "yerely rent of sixpence for ever, unless it shall comme to pass that the Townne shall be inclosed with a stone wall."* This shows that no wall of that kind was erected in the reign of King John, nor have excavations ever revealed any traces of such. The nearest town, Colchester, was surrounded by a stone wall; but then that town was originally fortified by the Romans, whilst Ipswich was not.

The course of the wall and ditch seems to have been nearly as follows. Starting from the West Gate, it was carried at the back of houses now standing on the North side of Westgate Street, across the lower end of High Street, where it abutted upon or joined the Tower Ditches. This portion of the street was until recently known as Barley Mow Lane, and extended from Westgate Street to Clay Lane. At this point stood "Bull Gate." This was a modern erection. Its form is depicted on Speed's Map, issued in 1610, and the Corporation Books show that, a few years previously (1603), a piece of ground was granted to Mr. Bull at a nominal rent, on which, for some cause not named, he was to "bylde A Gate house for the w'shippe of this towne." This Mr. Bull was the same year elected a Governor of Christ's Hospital. Wodderspoon says that this gate is not mentioned in any known Municipal Record, but Bacon's Annals, the Assembly and Great Court Books witness against him. Along what is still known as the Tower Ditches, the wall and ditch continued nearly in a straight line to the corner where "The Halberd" public-house now stands. Here the "North Gate" was placed. Proceeding onward in a South-Easterly direction to the junction with Cary Street (Carr Street) and Caldwell Street (St. Helen's), now known as Major's Corner, they formed an angle and turned Southward down Upper and Lower Orwell Streets (long known as the Upper and Lower Wash), running at the back of the Black Friars' Monastery, whose front boundary was in Foundation Street, then known as St. Edmund-a-Pountney's Lane, directly to the river, where all trace naturally terminates. Returning to the "West Gate," the ramparts were carried between the present Black Horse Lane (until recently known as Old Gaol Lane) and Lady Lane, leaving Daundy's Almshouses and the Chapel of Our Lady of Grace on the West. This Chapel stood at the North-West corner of Lady Lane, and the greater portion of Daundy's Almshouses were by the side of it. Passing at no great distance from the tower of St. Mary at the Elms Church, the ramparts were continued between Curriers' Arms Lane and Tanners' Lane, skirting Grey Friars' Bridge on the East side. Near this point they turned so as to embrace the Church of St. Nicholas and the Grey Friars' Monastery. This Monastery and its grounds occupied a large area between the church and the River Gipping. Proceeding in a South-Easterly direction towards the Church of St. Peter, they came to "Lose Gate," which stood nearly opposite to the only relic we have of Wolsey's College, and close to "The Ford." This well-known and useful place for traffic in ancient days crossed the river from Whip Street to the site now occupied by Mr. Burton's warehouses in College Street. The wall thus enclosed the churches of St. Peter and St. Mary Key within its boundaries.

This outline enables us to see what portions of the existing town were enclosed within the walls of Old Ipswich. In length they extended from the top of Northgate Street to the Common Quay, whilst the area enclosed was that between Black Horse Lane and Major's Corner. This space comprehended all that was strictly urban, and a walk of a mile and a half would be necessary to get round the walled town. The Churches of St. Matthew, St. Margaret, St. Helen, and St. Clement, the Chapel of Our Lady of Grace, and the Priory of Holy Trinity, where the mansion of Christchurch now stands, were without the walls, and consequently unprotected; whilst on the other side of the river were St. Austin and St. Mary in the Hamlet of Stoke. It was not unusual for religious houses and hospitals to be planted outside the walls of a town, in order that the Friars might be away from the commotions of the noisy Burgesses.

* Bacon's Annals, page 44.

The West or St. Matthew's Barr Gate gave entrance to the town from the West, and its memory is perpetuated in "Westgate Street." Hitherto information as to the position of this Gate has been loosely or incorrectly given by our local historians. Clarke says, very loosely, that it stood just before we come to the "Feathers" public-house; and Woddesspoon, in many respects a far more accurate historian, has in this case made a serious mistake. By an outline which he constructed from Speed's Map, and a drawing in the British Museum, he depicted the Town Wall as running along the Tower Ditches to Hyde Park Corner, and from thence down Lady Lane, the West Gate being the junction at the West side of Lady Lane. Thus placing the gate about thirty yards beyond its actual site.

Fortunately we are enabled to correct these errors and show conclusively the exact position of this gate. When the sewer was laid down in Westgate Street, the massive foundations of the old gateway were discovered. They crossed the road from the house which *adjoins* premises now occupied by Mr. H. Churchman as a retail tobacconist's shop, to the East end of the public-house known as "The Feathers." The East side of the gate was, therefore, but a few steps from the lane now known as Black Horse Lane. We know that the Gate House was restored in the 27th of Henry VI., 1448, by John de Caldwell,* and from that date used as a gaol. This enables us to bring confirmatory evidence of its position. Through the kindness of the late Mr. John Chevallier Cobbold, we are enabled to state that among the title deeds of "The Feathers," there is one dated 5th July, 1644, which thus describes the house:—"All that Messuage or Tenement wherein Thomas Boycott doth now inhabit and dwell, commonly called the "Princes Arms" or "Three Feathers," being in the parish of St. Matthew, in Ipswich, *between* the common way there called Lady Lane, on the part of the West, and the ditch of the said town of Ipswich, there called the wall ditch, on the part of the East, the North end whereof abutteth upon the common street there in part, and upon *the Gaol of the said town of Ipswich in part.*"

This picturesque relic of the olden time, as will be seen by the engraving which forms the first of our illustrations, consisted of two storeys, surmounted by a bell turret. The lower story, formed of stone, was, doubtless, erected in the fourteenth century. It carried antiquity on its face, was pierced by an archway for travellers on horseback, in carriages, or on foot. Whatever the ignorance of our forefathers, they knew how to build: their structures were put up with care, and could only be pulled down by great effort. The solidity and strength of the masonry were remarkable. One never sees a really old structure levelled with the ground without remarking upon the high quality of work displayed. There are "sermons in stones," lacking theology, but rich in moral pith. This gate, the upper storey of which was of red brick, was something more than a gate. In times of peace a watchman or warder had his "chambers" in it, in times of trouble the watchman or warder would make way for men of arms. When its original purpose ceased to serve, an economical borough administration turned it into a cage for thieves. The reader will be prepared to learn that such a gate bore little decoration, for it was built not for ornament, but for use, and that of a rough order.

Springing from each side of its West front, facing the country, was a deep bastion-like tower, two storeys in height. The archway gave a headway of about fifteen feet, with a span little exceeding that in width. This archway was of the familiar four-centred Edwardian type, obtusely pointed, and had on the external faces a hood moulding, consisting of a double row and fillet, and probably terminating, when first constructed, with carved dripstones. The deep archway was barred, vaulted, and well rendered in plaster to a smooth surface. In some engravings indications may be seen of the groove and recess which mark the position of the massive wooden gate, by which admission could be barred. There is, however, no trace of the portcullis, by which the upper portion was protected, a feature of a town gate which forms the well-known badge of Henry VII. and of the City of Westminster.

* Bacon's Annals.

A bold projecting string course of stone sharply defined the demarcation between the first storey and the more modern upper one. The latter follows the angles and lines of the lower stage, and was faced with brickwork, doubtless the small local red brick relief was given by diapering the surface here and there with lozenge-shaped patials of blackened bricks. The treatment with decorative patterns recalls similar work still standing in Northgate Street, part of a gateway built in 1471 by William Pykenham, then Archdeacon of Suffolk. This red brick storey, which is somewhat deeper than the stone one beneath, had nearly in the centre a square slightly projecting wooden dial to a town clock. This had only one hand, which would appear to indicate its antiquity. Old clocks had but one hand, the hour hand, as though minute sub-divisions of the hour were unnecessary. The Rev. Francis Haslewood has gleaned some interesting particulars respecting this clock, from the "Church Book" of St. Matthew's. We shall see that, although affixed to a Town Gate and Borough Gaol, it was kept in repair by the inhabitants of the Parish, thus :—

1629.	Whereof in Mr. Hayles hands wch is agreed to be allowed him toward his charges oute about the fynishinge of ye clock in the Borogate	xls.
	More agreed to be paid to Baddston for keeping the new clock iij quarters of a year - - - - -	xiijs. iiij <i>d</i> .
1630.	Whereof they are to pay to the sexten for keepinge of the clock one whole yeare, ended at Easter last - - - - -	xiiis. iiij <i>d</i> .
		s. d.
1704.	To Roger Moore, for clening and mending ye Goale Clocke - - -	1 6
1777.	Oct. 7th. Oil for the Clock - - - - -	1 0
1778.	April 19th. For a Clock Line - - - - -	1 6
1780.	April 14th. Thos. Read, for a Clock Line - - - - -	2 6

In "The Memorial Book" belonging to St. Matthew's, there is an entry on this subject, evidently made by a very economical Churchwarden :—

1698.	Memorandum that there is a note in the Church Chest, under the hand of Roger Moore, which oblige him to keepe the Gaol Clocke in good repaire during his life for eighteen pence a year.*
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The internal apartment of this West front was lighted by a single wide and massively barred window.

Still looking at the West side, a slightly later, but very picturesque, addition was made in brickwork of a deeper red tint, taking the form of an over-sailing course, carried on dwarf blind arcades, and capped with a coped battlement. Where the arcading should cross the angles of the turrets was a bold projecting parapet, with apertures, supported by arches, the angles and facets being reversed to those of the tower. This, like the other work, was coped by mimic battlements, and naturally gave the old gateway a fortress-like appearance.

There was a remarkable difference between the East and West fronts of this old Gate-house. All defensive strength and ornamentation was confined to the West front, which greeted the visitor. On the East front the face was flat. The towers of the West front were each cut into on the East side by a wide opening, closed by a stout oaken door, having iron studs and two broad and plain hinge straps. To the South of the left hand tower was a lancet-headed window, and there were three wide windows in the storey above. The facade was capped by three plaster-pointed gables of equal span, carrying as many roofs, covering in the archway and the towers. These roofs overhung the eaves on the North and South sides, and were visible above the parapet formed by the battlements on the West front, those on either side being hipped to a point, and were covered with the narrow irregular heavy tiles so familiar in old Ipswich. Their weight was too much for the slender purlins under the gables, as was evident

* Cover of St. Matthew's Parish Magazine, April, 1883.

from occasional sagging. On a town gate of some importance one would naturally expect to see examples of the ornamental and carved barge boards characteristic of the district, but decoration was not aimed at. As in the West front, the lower part of this East side was constructed of coursed ashlar masonry, which had at some former period been coated with plaster. From age and climate this had scaled off in patches, revealing the constructional details beneath. There was another feature on this side, viz., a wooden framework bell turret, which rose from the centre of the middle roof. This was plastered in the lower stage, above which the openings were partially filled with close-set turned balustrades. The roof of the turret was steep pitched, and covered with tiles like those on the main building, terminating in a knob finial and a very plain banner vane. Nearly in the centre of the middle gable a clock was fixed similar in style to that which adorned the West front of this gate.

Considering the gateway as a whole, it is evident that precaution was taken on the country or West side to protect the town from the danger of sudden attacks. The flanking towers were multiangular, which would prevent assailants from creeping up unnoticed, whilst the projecting arrisses rendered all attempts at scaling without ladders impossible. In the oversailing parapet above were apertures through which a shower of molten lead, or, failing this, boiling oil or water could be poured on the beseigers' heads. In the Southern or right-hand tower a cruciform loophole facilitated the discharge of arrows and bullets. The battlements of the parapet were also of a defensive character.

It only remains for us to endeavour to determine the probable date of erection of this gate. A very slight examination of the architectural details proves that it owes its picturesqueness to the fact that it was the work of three widely separated periods. The lower part is manifestly of the period of Edward III., say about 1370, while the upper stages agree well in character with the date of John de Caldwell, the liberal Ipswich Bailiff, who undertook the rebuilding about the middle of the fifteenth century. It is a little older in character than Pykenham's Gate, already referred to, and considerably anterior to the gateway of Wolsey's College, or the tower of Layer Marney, near Colchester. The turned balusters in the bell turret and its proportions indicate the days of the now fashionable "Queen Anne" style.

Wodderspoon, in his "Memorials of Ipswich," says, notices of the Barr Gate—that is the West Gate—occur at early periods. In 1483 common soil was granted to John Parker at 4d. rent, and in the next year the street now called Westgate Street is found named after the building—Barr Gate Street. In Ogilvie's map published 1674 a part of this street is named Gaol Gate Street. John de Caldwell, in the reign of Henry VI., offered to build a common Gaol at the Barr Gate. This offer was accepted, and the prisoners of the franchise were confined therein. In 1556 one, Richard Bird, was keeper of the Gaol, and some of the more ardent apostles of the Reformation—some, indeed, whose lives were sacrificed on our Cornhill—were confined under his charge. Bird was one of the Protestants of his day, and in a document dated May 18th, 1556, drawn up by Commissioners appointed by Queen Mary's Government to hunt out heresy and put a mark on suspected persons, complaint is made that Bird doth by evil counsel animate the prisoners of his sect. It is also said that he and his wife did cheek the Commissioners with unseemly words, tending almost to a tumult. Bird was evidently not an official of the ordinary stamp. A century later we find intolerant theology still supplied the prison at the West Gate with victims. Golding, in his "Coinage of Suffolk" says that John Story, the keeper of the Ipswich Gaol in 1655, is mentioned for his cruel and inhuman treatment of some Quakers, who were fined and imprisoned there for non-payment.

In the Corporation Records there is the following entry November, 1647 :—"Twenty nobles a year, quarterly shall be paid by the Treasurer to the Minister of St. Matthewes to preache once in three weeks at least to the prisoners in the Towne Gaol." The Puritans were all-powerful in Ipswich at the above date, and it is doubtless to them that the appointment of a Chaplain is due. Many of the prisoners who died in the Gaol were buried in the Churchyard of St. Matthew's. The Parish Register gives the following entries :—

- 1571. mother hasaerde prisoner was buried the xxij daie March.
- 1575. Jone Waters, a prison was buried the xxvj daie of September.
- 1576. A preson one Mother Penez was buried the vij day of Julie.
- 1626. Thomas Alderson gaoler was buried the 8 daie of March.
- 1630. Xpofer Toulson gaoler was buried the xvij daie of Januarie.
- 1640. Susan Russell from the Gaole June 4th 1640.

These entries are continued to the end of the eighteenth century, but the West Gate was abandoned as a Gaol long before that date, a cell only therein being occasionally used.

In the Record Office many documents may be seen relating to this prison and the prisoners confined at Ipswich during the Commonwealth period. In 1649 the Magistrates complain to the Council of State that they are "overburdened with prisoners from sea." The security of the prison may be inferred, as in 1652 pirates were sent here for confinement. Many foreigners taken prisoners at sea were kept at Ipswich till they could be exchanged. So numerous were they in 1652 that the Council of State ordered "that 4d. a day each, be allowed to the prisoners in Ipswich Gaol until discharged." The money to come out of the proceeds of the prize ships in which they were taken.

It will be interesting to note the fees paid to the gaoler when the prison was at this West Gate, though it may be remarked this was not the first prison erected in the town. In the proceedings which took place at the time of the first incorporation, John Prikeht was elected to keep the prison. In the 5th of Edward I., William de Goldham was Sergeant of the Town Gaol, and, for the safe keeping of the prisoners, was ordered to find sureties, not only that they should be kept safely, but should not be permitted too much indulgence. The stipend of this officer was 13s. 4d. yearly, to which were added the "ancient fees." In the 10th of Elizabeth, for every prisoner committed concerning felony, the gaoler received a fee of 1s. 2d., and at his discharge or acquittal, 3s. 4d.; for every arrest on personal action, 14d.; for diet at meals, 6d.; for lodging and bed each night, 2d.; for every oath taken, 1d. These payments went to the support of those who could not afford to pay for board. For persons committed for offences against the peace, a sum not exceeding 20d. was allowed. For the supply of fetters, the gaoler was not permitted to compound at above a halfpenny per lb., and for persons condemned, 1d.

In the 38th of Elizabeth, the fees of the gaoler were re-arranged. He was allowed 8d. per meal for all prisoners committed on action, and 6d. for opening the door to each of those confined above four days.

The gaoler wore a town cognizance, but the Bailiffs compelled him to buy his own cloth.*

The Borough Gaol of the last and at the commencement of the present century consisted of two houses, with a large garden, standing on the East side of Old Gaol Lane,† now known as Black Horse Lane, and with a frontage of some fifty feet in Westgate Street. "Escapes" from this gaol were by no means unusual, and that probably accounts for the statement made by Clarke in his History of Ipswich, that, notwithstanding the existence of a Borough Gaol, a cell in one of the towers of the West Gate was used by the gaoler as a dungeon or "black hole" for refractory prisoners until the demolition of the gate itself.

Part of the upper rooms over the gate were used by the Military at and previous to the year 1780 as a dépôt for gunpowder, the lower parts as a guardroom and places of confinement for soldiers. But a fire breaking out in the neighbourhood in the night of the 11th of November of that year, the inhabitants of the town petitioned the Secretary of State that the gunpowder magazine might be removed to another place, which was ordered to be done.‡

In 1587 it was proposed that the Barr Gate should be sold, though the offer of a purchaser was refused. It is probable this relic of ancient times continued unmolested until nearly the

* Wodderspoon's Memorials, page 229.

† In Ogilby's Survey, 1674, and in Pennington's Map, 1778, this lane is called "Burstall Lane."

‡ Batley MSS., British Museum.

close of the last century, when the question of its removal was revived, and the work was soon after carried into effect. We have no evidence why this decision was so promptly acted upon. The newspaper of that day did not report Great Court Meetings, and the "Gate" was sold before the Editor thought the subject worthy of a paragraph to interest his readers. In the Corporation Records, the first notice relating to its destruction will be found in the Minutes of the "Great Court, held 17th November, 1781, when it was agreed and ordered that St. Matthew's Gate, in this Town and Borough, be sold to the best bidder, in order that the same may be pulled down. All deficiencies to be made good by the purchaser. And that the Bailiffs, Portmen, and 24 men, or any five of them whereof one of the Bailiffs be one, be a Committee for conducting this business." At this Great Court both the Bailiffs, four of the Portmen, seven of the Common Council, and 41 of the Free Burgesses were present. In the *Ipswich Journal* of December 1st, 1781, the following advertisement appears:—"Whereas, at a Great Court, held for the town and borough of Ipswich, the 17th of this instant November, it was agreed and ordered That Saint Matthew's Gate in this town be sold to the best bidder, to be pulled down, and all deficiencies to be made good by the purchaser. Notice is hereby given That the said gate will be sold at the Town Hall, on Saturday the 8th day of December next, at Ten of the clock in the forenoon, when and where all persons desirous of purchasing the same, must deliver in proposals in writing sealed up. T. NOTCUTT, Town Clerk. Nov. 28."

In the *Ipswich Journal* of December 15th, 1781, a paragraph appears as follows:—"Saturday last the West Gate in this town was sold to be pulled down, for £32. The purchaser to make good all damages. It was built in the year 1430." Who was the purchaser? What was the destination of the materials? We may safely assume that in the walls of houses built at that time, some of these bricks and other materials were used. "Hard as a brick" is a colloquial comparison which has some justification, when we reflect that bricks made in 1430 did duty in this structure till 1781, and are even now in use. Five months elapsed from the date of this order of the Corporation before another Great Court was held. The Minute as to that sitting is as follows:—"Great Court, 16th April, 1782. Agreed and ordered that the waste piece of ground at St. Matthew's Gate, be let on building or other Leases for such term or terms, and at such Rents, as the Bailiffs, Portmen, and 24 men shall think proper, giving the parish of St. Matthew the preference." And the July following it was "Agreed and ordered that a Lease for 99 years be made of so much of the piece of waste ground at St. Matthew's Gate to Mr. John Cobbold, as adjoins to and abuts upon his premises called 'The Feathers,' at a yearly rent of one shilling, he keeping the pavement in repair during the said term, and that the said Lease be sealed with the Common Seal at some future Great or Petty Court."

And at the same time it was "agreed and ordered that a similar piece of ground laid waste on the opposite side of the street by the removal of the "Gate," should be leased for 99 years to Mr. John Bond, on the same terms and conditions as those named in the lease to Mr. Cobbold.

This West Gate was one of four answering to the four Leets, or wards, into which the town was divided, but the West Gate and North Gate are the only gates directly noticed in historic records. We have mentioned that on Speed's map of Ipswich a gate called "Bull Gate" is depicted, and an "East Gate" is mentioned in the local Domesday Book.* This East Gate was probably in the parish of St. Clement, but the exact situation of the South, as well as the East, Gate is involved in obscurity. Mr. William Batley, formerly Town Clerk of the Borough, says in his MS. notes that the North Gate is supposed to have been of very ancient date, but the time of its erection is unknown. The first mention of it, he says, is that in the years 1620 and 1622, the wall ditches were ordered to be paved and posts set up at both the Barr Gates.†

* Wodderspoon's "Memorials," 228. † Batley MSS., British Museum.

It is somewhat singular that whilst the form of the "West Gate" is preserved in several engravings and drawings, no authenticated engraving or drawing of the "North Gate" is known—although George Frost, to whom we are indebted for so many sketches of our picturesque antiquities, resided in the Town long before its demolition. On this subject Mr. H. C. Casley has favoured us with some details. The "North Gate," or, as it was frequently called St. Margaret's Barr Gate, stood across the upper part of Northgate Street, the contracted point between "The Halberd" and the opposite house plainly indicating its position. It is believed that no trustworthy representation of this gate, either in its pristine condition or in its venerable decay, exists, although sketches purporting to depict it are to be found in the hands of some collectors. The basis for them all is believed to have been an oil painting offered for sale by the late Mr. William Mason, a broker of this town. It gave the prospect from N. to S. of a lofty structure in rough stone with high pitch tile roof, having a central archway for road traffic with foot gates on either side. Through this middle arch could be seen the street, in those days called "Brook Street," with a Church spire in the distance. Making every allowance for an artist's licence, Ipswich readers scarcely need to be reminded that the only spire in early days in this vicinity was that of the Municipal Church of St. Mary at the Tower, and it would have been perfectly impracticable to have viewed the present spire—a much more imposing structure than its predecessor—looking through the gateway in any position, but the old spire stood several feet further to the north-west, and was destroyed by lightning in 1661, whilst the picture was certainly not 150 years old. It is somewhat strange, too, that the painting did not show either of the premises against which the Bar abutted, although the maps of the day evidence that those on both sides of the street were in great part in existence, whilst the picturesque gateway of Archdeacon Pykenham's former palace (1471) is likewise ignored—and no provision is seen for the brook which until comparatively recent years ran down the centre of the street.

Probably if the truth could only be known, St. Margaret's Barr Gate, like the "Lose" and the "Bull" Gates, had little about it that found favour in the artistic eye, which would account for no perfect delineation of the edifice having been handed down to us. It was a great obstruction to the highway, and its demolition was one of the first acts of the old Paving and Lighting Commission, after they obtained their Act in 1793. A dated pencil sketch by a lady, in the possession of the contributor, represents it in July, 1794, when the workmen were engaged upon the demolition of the wing walls, the Gate-house chamber being already gone. There is certainly little that is attractive in the fragment thus depicted. Specimens of the rough stone of which it was constructed may still be seen in the lower part of the "Halberd Inn."

Provision for travellers in the way of rest and entertainment was as necessary two hundred years ago as it is now, and we find that the houses, as shown in the engraving, on each side of the old West Gate were devoted to this purpose. They were timber-built houses in the old style, with over-hanging jetties, and chamber windows of small size quite under the edge of the roof. These houses were made attractive to travellers by huge signboards that projected some distance from the dwelling. The house shown on the left in the engraving was known as "The Three Kings." This was a small public-house, but on the other side of the street was a larger one, with "accommodation for man and beast," known as the Princes Arms, or the "Three Feathers." Although the old timbered building has vanished, and a modern erection of white brick occupies its site, the sign of "The Feathers" is retained. The original structure was taken down about twenty-five years ago, and to the last retained the appearance which it has in the engraving here given.

There are several old Town Gates still in existence, chiefly however in the cathedral cities, where they shut off the cathedral close from the general area of the city. In noticing them by way of comparison with the gate under notice, it must be borne in mind that most of these structures are of stone throughout, and the majority of them have higher architectural character and beauty than the Ipswich example ever possessed.

At Southampton there is a well-known Barr Gate across the High Street, not unlike the Ipswich gate, but it is larger and more imposing. The four gates of the City of York are all of solid masonry, having embrasures and battlements. At Canterbury there are several gates, and that known as West Gate somewhat resembles the West Gate in Ipswich, but it has circular towers developed on both faces, and is of masonry. The Norwich gates of Ethelred and Erpingham, very fine examples, are essentially "Close" gates. The gateway at Peterborough also led from the Market Place to a monastery near the Cathedral, and dates from 1330. There are four gateways into the "Close" at Salisbury, and a like number in the City of Wells. Two of the latter are about contemporary with the re-constructed Gate of John de Caldwell at Ipswich. From these notices we may infer that the West Gate at Ipswich was not equal either in defensive power or architectural beauty to the gates in many other towns, and that the gates which most conspicuously combined strength and grace were most frequently seen in connection with the predominance of ecclesiastical power.

We have thus far dealt with the "Gate" from a prosaic standpoint. Something has been said of its history. Something may be added as to the scenes of which it formed a part. From its stolid walls the fair and gentle may have looked upon the pomp and pageantry of State; its frowning walls may have been smitten with the peal of laughter, or enlivened with the emotion of the enthusiastic sightseer. Life was not all hard matter of fact in those days. Nature, as in our own times, had its softer side. Princes of the realm passed under its shadow. Ill-fated Queens, the pious and the impious, had looked, it may be, with awe upon its portentous features. A structure which stood the buffets of the elements and the shocks of time for four centuries would have much to say could its dumb stones be inspired with life. We should hear something of an obtrusive but sincere piety which enforced fidelity to forms, ceremonies, and creeds, for hard by stood the Chapel of "Our Lady of Grace." In this chapel was a shrine before which the faithful prostrated themselves in large numbers. Indeed it was second only in popularity to that greater shrine at Walsingham, in the adjoining county of Norfolk. Now-a-days, except in foreign lands, we know little about shrines, but they had their attractions in times gone by. The old gate outlived the shrine, a fact which is an awkward comment upon the sanctity of the latter, as well as, some will think, upon religious decadence. The Princes and Nobles, the ladies of fair degree, and the lords of high renown who flocked to the shrine, where are they? The old gate gave sharpness to their footfall as they went to pray in the Chapel of Our Lady in Lady Lane. The pious flavour has long been lost and Lady Lane has ceased to be historical or the resort of the fair and gentle. Pilgrimages are ended and the virtues of the shrine disappeared in the sequence of time. But all concerning it and those who went to pray in the Chapel of Our Lady are not lost. History, with its partiality for the great and lofty, is not silent. Would that it had been more observant and communicative. Bluff old Harry was not overburdened with piety, but he had pious wives; and who shall say that for the good of his soul prayers were not offered within earshot of this ancient gate? His first spouse, Catherine of Arragon, visited (1517) Lord Curzon at his house in Silent Street, and paid an early morning visit to the Chapel of Our Lady of Grace. From Silent Street to Lady Lane her Majesty went on horseback, and she would not go unattended. In 1522 Henry himself went there to pray. He had not then quarrelled, either with his spouse or with the Pope. In the year before Leo conferred upon him the title of "Defender of the Faith," so shortsighted was even a Pope. Thither, too, "our Cardinal" repaired; and Wolsey—who, with all his greatness of mind, delighted in magnificence—we may be sure, would flavour his piety with ostentation. Seated on his white palfrey and surrounded by noblemen, and preceded by cross-bearers and pillar-bearers, he would seek to impress the spectators by his gorgeous retinue as a preliminary to impressing them by his zealous devotions. Queen Mary, too, when troubles vexed the State and her own bosom, passed through the gate (1553) on her way from Kenninghall to Framlingham Castle. Elizabeth, the last of the Tudors, must

have (in 1561, 1565, and 1577) startled its grim portals with the grandeur of her display. The swarthy face and loud laugh of the profligate Charles II.—the King whose mistresses outnumbered the wives of Henry VIII.—were once seen and heard while passing through this gate (1668) on his way to Christ Church. Later Kings and Princes of the Royal House also made its acquaintance. But a greater than any of them passed through this archway, trotting a splendid horse, in 1597. He was a man about thirty-five years of age, with an outward grace and aspect. Somewhat slight in build, and of average height, he, though round in flesh, looked worn for his years. Dressed sumptuously, he rode with ease, his head well set, erect, and framed in a thick starched fence of frill, his hat and feather tossed aside from a broad and high forehead, over which crisped and curled a mass of dark soft hair. A short trimmed beard decorated a face partly shaven, which was made still more attractive by good eyebrows, penetrating eyes, and a mouth small and delicate, a thousand pranks and humours lurking in its twinkling, tremulous lines. Its smile combined intellect and benevolence, lighting up a face which you were insensibly drawn to admire. This was Francis Bacon (afterwards Viscount St. Albans), on his way from Shrubland to the Moot Hall, to take his oath as a Free Burgess, having previously been elected to represent the Borough of Ipswich in the Parliament at Westminster.*

These Kings and Queens, the Shrine of our Lady, and the Gate itself are now only in the pages of history! The prison bars and chains—the irons once deemed essential to prison discipline—the massive iron doors which alike prevented the escape of the pirate, the heretic, and the traitor, are gone for ever. The persecution and cruelty inflicted, and the misery endured by the innocent as well as the guilty, within the walls of this strong tower of defence are, happily, things of the past. The gate and something of its surroundings we have re-called as matters of local interest, and from what has been said the reader will gather that if time has its revenge it also has its triumphs. The gate is gone, and with it, happily, the necessity for its existence.

* Hepworth Dixon's *Life of Bacon*.





J. G. Cooper

The Ancient House.

THE ANCIENT HOUSE

AND ITS HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS.



It would be difficult to find a house, belonging to a private individual and never inhabited by one beyond the rank of a squire, which possesses so many attractions to the artistic eye as the "Ancient House," in the Butter Market, Ipswich. This house was long known as "Sparrowe's House," from its having been the residence of the Sparrowe family for nearly three centuries, and it is so described in all publications respecting it prior to 1860. Some of the rooms took their present form and appearance when Shakespeare was only three years old, and Elizabeth had been but nine years on the throne; but various parts of the house are of a much older date. Perhaps no period of our history has been so rich, so varied, so full of life and of all that makes a nation great, as the latter half of the sixteenth century, when the destiny of the Empire was shaped. English merchant ships were traversing every sea, and Ipswich played no obscure part in the commerce of the age. Cavendish, the second Englishman who sailed round the world, and his companion, Thomas Eldred, who lived in the parish of St. Clement's, were familiar figures in the town, and probably were friends of George Copping, to whom the "Ancient House" owes its present form. The Continental trade carried on at the Port of Ipswich brought foreign workmen to it, and their influence was displayed in the architecture of the period. It may be assumed that Copping had amassed wealth by foreign trade, since it was only the merchant adventurer who enriched himself in that age. The solidity and stability of the house he built are typical of the man. No common-place citizen would have built a house of which, as an ornament to the town, many generations of Ipswich men have been justly proud, and many more are yet, we trust, to point to it as an example of what their forefathers could accomplish.

The façade of this remarkable building is of a highly ornamental character, and unique in its way, for it may be cited, not only as the most interesting specimen of existing ornamental woodwork and pargeting, but as one of the most richly decorated domestic buildings in England. It differs so essentially from any other that the date of its erection has been a matter of ingenious speculation to architects and archæologists. Clarke, in his "History of Ipswich," says "it was built in 1567, by a person of the name of Clyatt, for Mr. Robert Sparrowe, who was several times Bailiff of Ipswich." This statement, like many others by the same writer, will not bear investigation. The Mr. Robert Sparrowe who resided at Ipswich in 1567 held several official positions in the corporate body, but was only once elected Bailiff. Wodderspoon has shown that the house was not built for any member of the Sparrowe family, as Mr. George Copping resided there in 1570.* Portions of the interior are of much

* George Copping lived in the parish of St. Lawrence, and probably in the Ancient House, long prior to this date. On the 17th of September, 1545, he was married at St. Lawrence Church, to Margaret Typho, and in the following year his first-born, Nicholas, was baptised there. Seven other baptisms followed, the last one being in 1567. He was elected one of the Chamberlains of the Borough in 1551, and ten years later we find the Headburrows were ordered to allow George Copping to take a piece of land at the back of Lord Curzon's house in Silent Street, at a rent of half-a-crown a year. This land was part of the common soil, and situated in what is now called Turret Lane. The ground thus obtained was kept as a bowling green and garden by the Sparrowe family down to nearly the middle of the present century. The site is now built upon by the British Schools, Turret Green Chapel, and other buildings.

In 1573, the year in which it is said that Mr. Robert Sparrowe took possession of the Butter Market House, we find George Copping residing on the country side of Stoke Bridge. The Corporation at that date allowed him, on certain conditions, to have next "*to his own grounds*" a piece of the common soil in the channel, eight feet in breadth, and extending from the Bridge Eastwards in length 140 feet, at a nominal rent, that of a penny a year. (Bacon's Annals.) A notice in the Church Books shows that his remains were interred at St. Lawrence, on the 28th August, 1578.

earlier date than the exterior, but there is no evidence to show when this change of character took place. Architectural experts assign the present front of the building to the age of James I., say 1610, whilst other parts of the house carry one back to the time of Henry VII., when Wolsey was astonishing the professors at Oxford as a "boy bachelor"—a time when strength rather than ornament, durability instead of decoration, were the characteristics of English domestic architecture.

The late Mr. R. M. Phipson, an antiquary and also an architect of wide experience, to whom every facility was afforded for examining this old house, when describing it more than thirty years ago, said, "I have been unable to obtain any positive data from which a satisfactory conclusion could be drawn as to the exact period of the erection of this very interesting building. The information to be gleaned from documents in the possession of the Sparrowe family and in the hands of collectors of deeds and papers connected with the locality is so meagre as to be of little service in elucidating the question. It is, therefore, only by investigating its architectural characteristics that a solution of the problem can be arrived at. After a minute and careful investigation of its details in every part, I feel satisfied that the house, as we now see it, cannot be referred to any one period, but has been the accumulated work of a lengthened series of years, extending over probably nearly two centuries. The earliest portion of the edifice, with the exception of the foundations, which cannot now be examined, is undoubtedly a hammer-beam roof of three bays, the wall plate of which is 21 feet from the ground. The existence of this roof was for many years unknown, a floor having been thrown across its whole area, just below the level of the cornice. When it was discovered in 1801 several wooden angels, &c., were found upon the floor, having, doubtless, fallen from the ends of the hammer-beams and intersections of the ribs, their fastenings (wood pins) still remaining in their original position. This roof is of the date of Henry VII. (say 1495), and probably belonged either to a chapel, the usual adjunct to a mansion at that period, or it may have been the roof of the hall, which often took this form, as at Helmingham and Gifford's Hall in this county. The external wall from which this rises has been so recased some hundred years since as to leave no indication as to door or window openings. Next in date, I imagine, is a wooden corridor, forming two sides of a courtyard adjoining the hall or chapel."*

Another writer, whose taste and judgment are well known, says, "The great glory of Ipswich, as regards Architecture, is the house of Mr. J. Eddowes Sparrowe, situate in the Old Butter Market. The weekly market for poultry, &c., was held in this street up to the year 1811. There is, perhaps, no house in the kingdom which, for its size, is more curiously or quaintly ornamented, or contains within its apartments more that can interest the connoisseur in painting, the student in genealogy, or the lover of antiquity. The architect of the building is unknown, but it was believed to have been built for the residence of Mr. Robert Sparrowe, in 1567, by an individual named Clyatt. It has, however, been discovered within a few years that in the year 1570 the building was occupied by George Copping, and by him erected in 1567. This information is contained in the will, made about that date, of Mrs. Joan West, widow of William West, who, in devising the Waggon Inn, still the next house to Mr. Sparrowe's residence, describes her own tenements as standing 'between G. Copping's house upon the West and the tenements of — Ward, where one Ralph Carrawaye now dwelleth, on the East, whose North head abutteth on the Fish Market Street, and the South head thereof on the Churchyard of St. Stephen.' Added to this evidence, the initials of G. Copping exist upon the doorway and over the mantel of an inner room of the building, and, being accompanied by the figures 1567, are presumed to mark, not only the name of the owner, but also the date of the erection of the building."†

The main front of the house has a North aspect extending along the Butter Market some 62 feet, with a return façade in St. Stephen's Lane. Briefly described, the elevation consists

* Suffolk Archæological Proceedings, vol. 2.

† Wodderspoon's Historic Sites of Suffolk.

of a double plinth and pilastered ground story, a richly pargeted principal story, having five large bay windows, all differently treated, projecting over the ground story, above which is a broad over-sailing cornice, with a series of gable dormers in the roof. With the exception of the double plinth, which is of brickwork, the building is of timber, with parget-work plastering and carving in high relief. The roof and the dormers are tiled.

At the pavement level the elevation, on both the North and West fronts, commences with a plinth of red brickwork, about three feet in height. This brickwork continues to the underside of the ground floor window sills, and forms the base on which the building is constructed. It has been either renewed or scraped, but an examination of the earliest illustrations of the house shows that it follows the old lines. Above this dado is a substantial oak sill, some four inches in depth, and this extends along the main front, broken only by two doorways, one near the centre, the other at the extreme East end. From this massive oak sill the timber framework, in the form of solid richly-carved oak pilasters, springs. The original doors have been removed. The panel over the principal entrance is decorated with a boldly carved pediment of Jacobean character, ornamented with fruit.

Confining our attention first to the main front, we note that the ground floor is divided into fourteen equal spaces, viz., eight windows, four blanks, and two doorways, all of which are deeply recessed. These divisions are decorated with fifteen boldly projecting pilasters, gradually increasing in size from base to cap, and ornamented on each of the exposed sides with bunches of grapes and drops of flowers carved in high relief. On the front of each pilaster towards the base, looking in some instances alternately right and left, are grotesque animals' heads, the expression of which represents the agony of having to bear the superincumbent weight. All these pilasters were believed by Mr. Phipson and others to be of oak, the only wood which was used for carving in the sixteenth century, but closer examination has proved some of them to be of deal, evidence of altered arrangements and repairs in modern times. The interspaces were formerly filled alternately with a window and a wood panel, the main entrance to the mansion being in one of the otherwise blank intervals. Now that the house has been modernised for trade purposes, the old quarry panes in the windows and some of the blank panels are replaced by single sheets of plate glass. The shutters in the blank spaces evidently belong to different periods. The earlier ones consist of framework faced with over-lapping bands, secured with rows of lozenge-shape headed nails. Till recently the old door at the East end was of this pattern. The other shutters are of framed circular panel-work, moulded and intersected. The architrave mouldings surrounding the windows, panels, and doors are decorated with the Classical egg-and-tongue ornament. The pilasters are surmounted by semi-Ionic caps, beneath which the pilasters are rounded off and carved with an acanthus leaf. At the angles surmounting these caps are heavy and deeply-cut double-scroll brackets, which form an ornamental support to the overhanging first floor.

This floor is distinguished by a series of four large bays, each straight in front with a quadrant on either return. The space between the bays is occupied by widely-spaced coupled pilasters connected by festoons. In the central panel, which is an exception, the Royal Arms, crest, and supporters of the Stuart period are fully displayed, with the letters "C. II., R." over the top *Carolus Secundus, Rex*. Beneath is the motto, "*Dieu et mon Droit*." The whole of the work on this story is in *alto relievo* modelled in plaster. The space between the windows on the left, or East, side of this is occupied by emblems of the earth, a vase of flowers and foliage, the pilasters being connected by a festoon of similar character. The small panel beyond the Eastern window has a single pilaster, and from rings on either side just below the capital is suspended a festoon of flowers and fruit. Turning to the compartment between the bays on the Western half of the main front, we note at the foot of the one immediately to the right of that containing the Royal Arms emblems of water, a figure of Neptune holding his trident and mounted on a hippocampus (the armorial supporters of Ipswich) in lieu of the customary dolphin, while the festoon coupling the pilasters is a string of fishes. The Western panel

contains the pelican, the legendary bird of piety, feeding her young from her own breast, and here the festoon above is formed by aquatic birds. Thus we see a natural association between the subjects of the lower part and the treatment above, fruits, fishes, and birds forming a regular progression in dignity over the entire front.

Above this principal floor is a very bold over-sailing cornice, elaborately moulded in many members. In the centre of each bay the cornice is broken by a portion mitred over the key of the arch on the face of each window. These projecting portions, which are exactly similar in contour to the rest of the work, effectively break the rigid uniformity of the sky line as seen from the street level, and afford just the required relief to the strongly-marked continuous mouldings. The upper surface of the cornice furnishes a promenade round the upper part of the building. The leads here are wide enough for two persons to walk abreast. Above this level four gabled dormers carry upwards the lines of the bays. - In each of the pediments beneath the moulded barge boards of the gables an attempt is made by parieting to symbolise mythological events. There are difficulties in the way of interpretation which are not removed by the wear and tear of two hundred years. The first example, beginning at the East end, probably represents Perseus slaying Medusa; the next two, Hercules and his Club; and the last, Cupid and his bow. The panels beneath the windows are left blank, giving a much-needed relief to the front.

"No chimneys can be seen from the street," say Clarke and Wodderspoon. This was, doubtless, one of the peculiarities of the structure, but it is a peculiarity no longer. There is a chimney toward the East end.

Returning to the bays, it will be found that they exhibit unity of treatment. The upper part of each is glazed in small rectangular quarries, the middle lights opening beneath a semi-circular head with ornamental key. At the springing line of the head is a moulded transom, intersecting the side lights. The vertical quoins are carved on the face with bunches of fruit, forming a running ornament. These quoins continue through the transom to the corner of the bay, terminating in a carved head. The lower third of each bay, which is occupied by figures modelled in plaster, is still more interesting. The central square is filled with an emblematical representation of one of the four quarters of the globe, with its peculiar attributes. The names are given in relief above. Europe, in the left hand bay, has as its attribute a crowned female seated on a horse, holding in her right hand a cornucopia, and apparently pointing with her left hand to an ecclesiastical looking edifice, of Gothic design. The second contains a seated figure, Asia, wearing an Oriental cap of State, with two pointed ends, and in her left hand is a sceptre. She is apparently seated on a camel, while in the background is a palm tree and in front a domed and minaretted mosque, intended, probably, as in the former case, to indicate the predominating form of religion. The third figure, Africa, rides upon a crocodile, and protects himself by an umbrella from the rays of a scorching sun. He holds a barbed spear, while in place of the building seen in previous panels there is a small bird. The fourth compartment, representing America, gives us the nude figure of a man standing with legs widely apart, one hand on his hip and in the other a quiver full of arrows. On his right crouches a bison. The panels on the returns or sides of each window are filled with free scrollwork, in each case differing in style and character and adding greatly to the beauty and variety of the design.

The return front in St. Stephen's Lane, which is about 26 feet deep, follows in its main features the details of the principal front, and is treated with similar elaboration. The chief variation is in the subjects. On the ground floor are three bays of pilasters, the intervening panels being now occupied by shop windows, and beyond there is a circular-headed domestic window. The first floor projects as in front, and in the centre is a bay window. In the upper portion of the broad-pilastered panel, between this window and the corner, is a festoon formed of musical instruments, whilst in the lower part is a pastoral scene, probably founded

on a discourse in the First Eclogue of Virgil. Beneath the arm of a shady tree a shepherd is seated tending his sheep, and to him approaches another shepherd, having long hair and the bucolic dress of the middle of the seventeenth century; in his right hand he holds deferentially a low broad-brimmed hat, and in his left a long shepherd's crook. In the panel beneath the window is a kneeling figure of Atlas supporting the world on his shoulders by both hands. He is represented as an old bareheaded man with a long straggling beard. To the right of the bay window is a circular one, treated, as to the woodwork surrounding it, exactly like the blank panels on the ground floor in the main front, but above this are figures of Angels. The over-hanging cornice has the same peculiar projection over the bay as already described in the main façade. The gable above has meagre barge boards, and over the dummy window in the middle is a spirited representation of a man on horseback. To the south of this window is a plainer one, coeval in date.

Cast ornaments in plaster of the present day bear witness to their nobler parentage in the days of hand-wrought pargetry. This pargeting or modelling of plaster in low relief was often employed in ornamenting timber-built houses in the seventeenth century. It was occasionally used for interiors, as in the Old Assembly Room, Ipswich. In some cases panelling was adopted for the lower parts of rooms, and, in the place of tapestry, pargeting was employed as a means of enriching the walls above. Sometimes these plaster enrichments consisted of foliage and flowers, sometimes of figures, sometimes simply of ornamental mouldings. Modern ideas of improvement having led to the disappearance of many fine specimens of this kind of work, existing examples are scarce. Less elaborate specimens than this Ancient House may be seen in Cheshire, in Essex, and in Kent, also in Rouen and its neighbourhood. At Newport, in Essex, there is a good example of pargetry, modelled foliage and fruit running the length of the house, and over the porch is a crown in full relief, resting on a cushion. The exterior of "The Sun Inn," at Saffron Walden exhibits some fine pargeting, but the details are singularly grotesque. In Wyvenhoe, the first floor of some low and poor looking houses is most elaborately decorated in this style. The ground floors are covered with weather boarding, which contrasts greatly with the enrichment above. All these examples are said to be seventeenth century work. But, of all known exteriors decorated in the pargeted style, this Ancient House is the richest and best example. The age was a stirring period in English history, and the quaint carvings and the grotesque extravagance frequently introduced into the external decoration of domestic architecture seem to indicate a love of freedom, and an imagination which gave itself joyous expression. The work on the front of this Ancient House is altogether of a higher order. There is a marked absence of the grotesque. Symbol and art are in felicitous union. The emblematical figures representing Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, show that the architect was a man of genius. The subjects drawn from Classic and other sources are treated in a sympathetic spirit, and all the details of the ornamentation bespeak the influence of the Italian Renaissance. Taken as a whole, this house may be described as one of the most finely decorated specimens of domestic architecture of the seventeenth century.

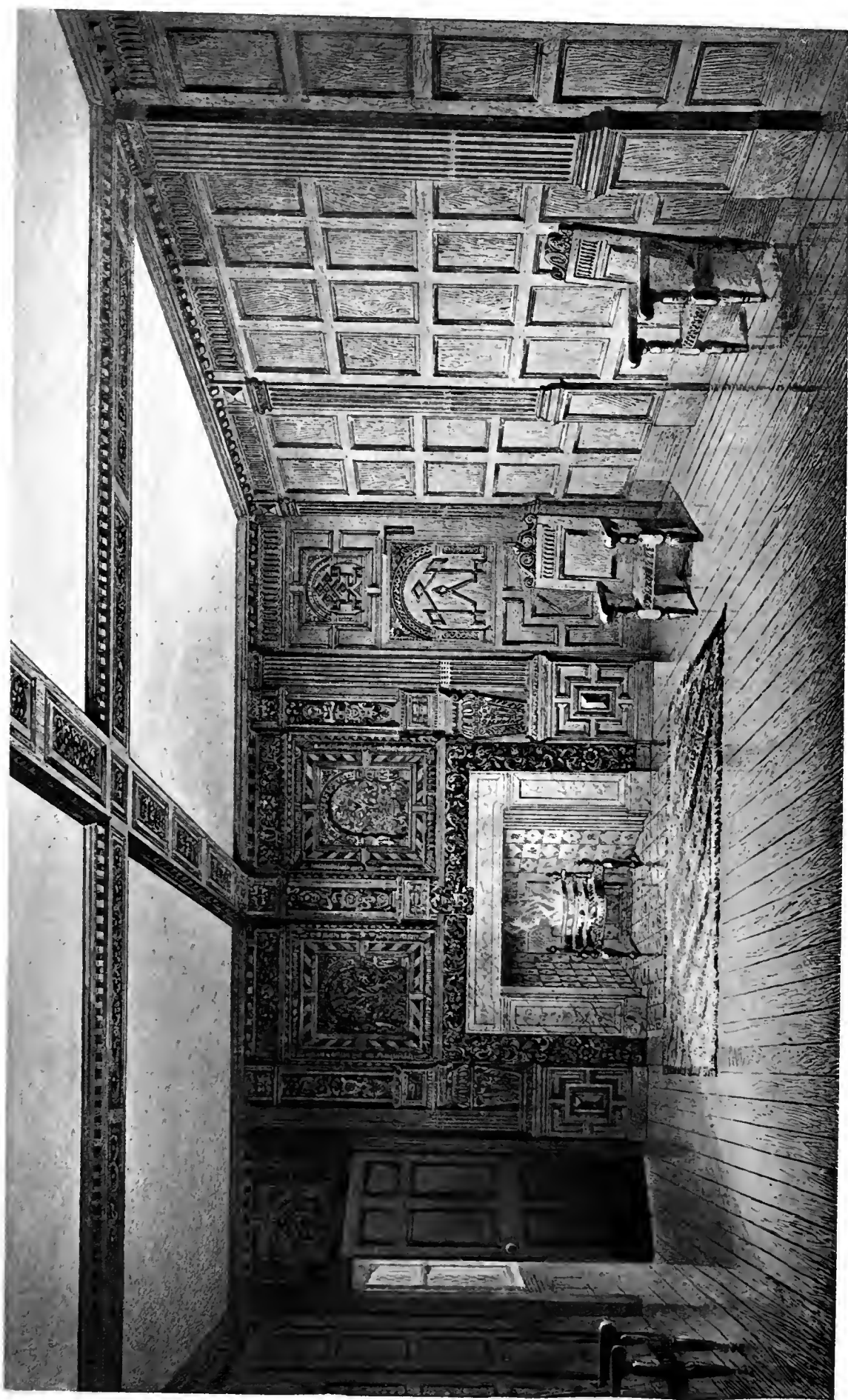
Thus far the exterior. It is time to step inside. What was formerly the entrance hall of the old mansion is now part of a bookseller's shop. Neither in the ceiling nor in the surroundings is there an indication of anything beyond the Hanoverian age. A staircase leads to what was originally the drawing room, but what is now a reading room and library. Paintings and portraits by Vandyke, Sir Peter Lely, Sir Godfrey Kneller, Gainsborough, and other masters have given place to rows of books. The room extends over the chief portion of the front. It is lighted by three of the bay windows which are seen from the Butter Market and one at the West end. The splendid effect of the windows and the richness of the ceiling decoration at once strike the eye. The bays add materially to the size of this otherwise magnificent room. The quaintness of the iron fastenings to the casements is worthy of notice, being of the same date as the front of the buildings.

The fire-place and mantel are modern, for in the time of the late owner and his immediate predecessors there was nothing of the kind in the room. This splendid apartment was formerly occupied as a *summer* drawing room only. At other seasons it was used and appreciated as a morning room and promenade. The ceiling is traversed by massive oak beams divided into six compartments. These are elaborately worked in plaster with wreaths of fruit and flowers and shields at the corners. The shields formerly added greatly to the beauty of the ceiling. The arms of the Sparrowe family and of those immediately connected with them were emblazoned thereon. This ceiling is of the same date as the ornaments on the front of the house. The decoration is bold and massive, though somewhat heavy in detail. Originally it must have been very effective. But the age of white ceilings has come in and the shields and coloured decorations are covered thick with whitewash; the ancient glory is blotted out.

Wodderspoon describes the room as extending "over the whole of the front part of the house." This is an error. Part of the front at the East end is occupied by a small room, which is lighted by one of the bay windows. The rooms were of the same dimensions as they are now long before Mr. Wodderspoon saw them, and experts have informed us that there is no indication of any alteration in that respect having taken place since the present front was built. In one corner of the room is a small door now disused, which opens to a staircase leading to the roof. This staircase is noticeable for the quaintness of the balusters and details. The small room at the East end is now a repository for books belonging to a Medical Society. In the time of the late Mr. John Eddowes Sparrowe it was used as a billiard room. The decoration of the ceiling is totally different to that of the large room, *fleurs de lis* being used.

In the first year of the present century a singular discovery of a concealed loft, with a hammer-beam roof, was made in this upper region of the house. This room or loft is twenty-three feet long and fifteen feet seven inches wide. It has three hammer-beam principals, with carved braces, richly moulded collar beam, moulded purlins, and curved wind braces. The Pointed form of the arch has naturally suggested the idea that this loft once formed part of a small chapel or oratory. Wodderspoon supposed that it existed as such in a perfect state at the date of the Reformation, but after that period, the open assumption of the proscribed faith becoming dangerous, the chapel was converted into a sitting room, and the roof was concealed by a beamed ceiling. Others have thought that the loft formed the roof of a hall to an older mansion. Either supposition is not without probability, but as Mr. Phipson tells us that when this loft was accidentally discovered in 1801 several wooden angels were found upon the floor, having doubtless fallen from the ends of the hammer beams and from the interstices of the ribs, the evidence in favour of a chapel is stronger than that of a hall. This discovery dispels the idea that the house was built in 1567, as this roof is of much earlier date. The house was doubtless then re-modelled and re-arranged.

Returning to the shop, a door nearly at the foot of the stairs leads to a room which looks on to the court yard. The walls of the room are panelled in oak, bold, deep, and well moulded, the excellent workmanship of which is unfortunately to some extent concealed by repeated coats of light-coloured paint. The mantel-piece, which is of good design and workmanship, has but little carving on it, and that is in low relief. In the frieze are two 3-inch circles, enclosing the letters "G. C." and "M. C." in monogram style, and on a pilaster to the left of the fireplace the former initials are repeated. Mr. Phipson, referring to "G. C." remarked that these initials are those of George Copping, who owned this property before it came into the possession of the Sparrowe family in 1573. He did not allude to the second monogram, "M. C." which may fairly be taken as the initials of Margaret Copping. There are two doors near the fireplace, one of which is modern. On the top of the old door is "1567," also carved in low relief. The panelling in the room is, with one exception, the oldest specimen of this kind of work in the building. The exception is an example



Rich Dining Room, Ancient House.

of the linen pattern panelling, just outside this very room, that belongs to the time of Henry VII.

A doorway from this room leads to a passage, on one of the walls of which a number of five-inch Dutch tiles are embedded. On these, painted in blue and white, are full length representations of Mars and Pallas—the god of war and goddess of wisdom—clad in the massive and gorgeous trappings of Homeric heroes, with the name of each in scrollwork at foot. The tiles, thirteen rows in height, are accurately fitted together, and the figures and the scrollwork thus formed reach to a height of five feet five inches. They are unique both in design and execution, and it is inferred that they originally formed the inside jambs of some important mantel-piece. They are manifestly out of place in their present position.

Re-entering the room, a doorway on the other side of the fireplace leads to what was in former days the oak dining room, which is low, but of good dimensions. It is snug enough for a sociable dinner party, but lacking anything of an exhilarating tendency. Its surroundings produce a gloomy first impression. It is lighted from the South by a modern window, and the sun's rays, therefore, enliven it. But the effect of the dark panelling, low ceiling, and the proximity of adjacent buildings is unmistakeable, and it and the absence of that cozy attraction, a blazing fire—"that live thing in a dead room," as Sydney Smith said—combined to give the room, when we saw it, a sombre appearance. The surface of the walls is panelled in dark oak. This carries us back to the age of Elizabeth, yet the wood looks as sound now as when first put up. The panelling is divided into bays by fluted pilasters, with carved capitals and moulded base and dado, having in addition pilasters of a more imposing character under the cross beams. The mouldings of the panels, of course, are hand wrought. Above the panel-work and immediately under the cornice is an enriched frieze of Elizabethan character.

Round the fireplace opening are moulded marble jambs and mantel. Outside these the richly carved woodwork commences with a wide band, containing a combination of acanthus scrollwork and some natural foliage and fruit. This carving is of later date than the panelling: on the base of both pilasters the date is carved, 1603. The overmantel has three pilasters, and immediately beneath the centre one, surrounded with rich carving, and forming a sort of key to the work, are the arms of the Sparrowe family, forming a strong bas relief, the crest, with a silver horn to the unicorn, not being omitted. This is the starting point of the decoration; and the acanthus ornamentation here used has been described as the most masterly example of conventionalism that has ever been seen in ornamental art. The Greeks, who valued clearness rather than richness of effect, selected the acanthus as a model for ornamental purposes, and their judgment has been endorsed by the best artists of all ages. The carver of the work in this room has, by a beautiful system of curved lines, which balances and contrasts the various scrolls, displayed his fancy and ingenuity most attractively, giving sufficient likeness between each scroll to make them balance, without imparting the appearance of mechanical reproduction. In this overmantel the carver has displayed the richest part of his art. Two large panels are divided by a pilaster and flanked by pilasters. Each of these is carved in a style which ranks with the best work of the time in which it was executed. The carving consists of figures, terminating with ornamental shields and cartouches. The flanking pilasters rest on a dado and base, and are continued by a second pilaster to an enriched base, forming a line with the pilasters in other parts of the room.

Besides this decorative carving, this overmantel has some beautiful marquetry ornamentation. Two large panels, between pilasters, are thus filled, adding greatly to the richness and dignity of this side of the room. The design in each panel is a vase with handles. Out of the vases spring elaborate foliated scrolls, terminating in conventional flowers and completely filling each space. Small birds perch on the handles of the vases. The framework and the compartments are worked in coloured woods, probably lime and oak. Marquetry was the fashion at the end of the sixteenth century, and the owner of the Ancient House, who was evidently a rich man, seems to have been of opinion that his dining room, on which he had lavished a wealth of

carving, would not be complete without examples of it. In the fifteenth century Florence was noted for decorations of this character, and these panels show that half a century later specimens of the art for which the Italians had become pre-eminent were introduced into Ipswich by a gentleman who was probably only a merchant draper, a resident in the town. The style, by some, is said to be Indian, while others maintain it to be Persian.

Mr. Wodderspoon, in describing this room, says that the oak is carved in a manner which would do honour to Grinling Gibbons. This remark must be taken *cum grano salis*. The two modes of carving are totally different, and cannot be compared. One is the result of skill, the other of genius. The carving in this overmantel is cut out of the solid. The work grew into beauty under the artist's hands; whilst much of that of Grinling Gibbons, particularly his rendering of delicate leaves and flowers, or birds, is worked without a background, and exhibits that marvellous power which can only be ascribed to genius.

The door on the right of the fireplace is especially worthy of note; it combines carving and fretwork moulding of a very delicate character. The carving and moulding were worked and finished independently of the door, and when completed were fastened on to the surface they were intended to decorate. The panel above the door is of the same character. All this work is of the same date as the carving in the overmantel, and aids greatly in producing that harmony which charms all lovers of art workmanship. The door on the left is modern, and of greater height than its companion. To gain this accommodation the frieze next the cornice has been taken away, and the pilaster at the side reduced to about half its original width.

When such carefully preserved specimens of an old art as we have here in this overmantel are examined, the excellence of early seventeenth century wood carving will be readily admitted. The quiet refined beauty, the delicacy and richness, the elegance and freedom of the carving, have only to be seen to be admired. There is in the example under notice a display of energy, and what the craftsmen call "go," that are highly prized by students of the art. The smoothness of surface and purity of colour, characteristic of marble, are not to be found in wood, and it is useless to try to produce effects which are foreign to the substance. But the artist in this case knew exactly what to expect from his materials. He was familiar with the mysteries of line, the subtleties of curves, and the growth of plant life, and he attempted nothing that was legitimately outside the wood carver's art. His work is as fresh and sharp as if newly cut. The keenness of his tool marks, which gives crispness to his designs, shows that he valued every stroke of his chisel, and these are among the strongest evidences of his skill.

If asked whether this work was done by foreigners, an expert would reply that the figures are strikingly English. They are somewhat clumsy in form, and more Gothic than Classic in appearance. Human figures are sparingly introduced, and those which are shown lack the refinement of Italian, or even of French work, but they are less effeminate, and even more vigorous and rich, than Italian or French Renaissance. The work is at the same time free from the quaintness which characterizes the German work of that day. It lacks the robust and vigorous character of good old Gothic work, but exhibits a degree of culture and refinement which balances the loss of the other qualities. The general design of the work is good. The proportions are well kept. Details are subordinate to leading lines, and one cannot fail to notice the harmony of the whole. The blending of Classic and Gothic characteristics is particularly successful, and the room presents one of the finest examples of English Renaissance to be found anywhere in East Anglia.

With a few incidental notices we conclude our remarks on this, the most richly decorated, apartment in the Ancient House. The room is lighted by a large window (modern), which overlooks a small garden. In one of the upper lights are fragments of old stained glass bearing the Arms of the Sparrowe family. The fireplace is open, with cheeks and back fitted with old 5-inch Dutch tiles, the embellishments on which are alternately horsemen and small landscape views. A modern grate supplies the place of the old dog irons of former days.

The ceiling, plain, flat, and whitewashed, is intersected by two large oak beams at right angles. These, contrary to custom, are cased, and the casing is rich in carved panels. This ornamental work gives a capital effect to the ceiling. The cornice is enriched with dentils, which also run round the beams. The panelling gives repeated evidence of alterations and re-arrangements, and reveals occasional irregularities. These lead one to suppose that at some time or other a departure from the original size or form of the room was made. Wodderspoon gives the dimensions as 22 feet by 21 feet. The actual measurement now is 23 feet by 17 feet. Owing probably to some settlement, the height is not uniform. The greatest height is 9 feet 8 inches.

On leaving the house from this pannelled room, we enter a paved courtyard, such as was usually found in old Tudor mansions. It runs on the west side of the building, and the entrance to it is from St. Stephen's Lane. Though very small for so magnificent a house, it contains within its narrow boundary some of the oldest portions of the building. Round two sides of the yard is a wooden corridor supporting a carved gallery, lighted by six long but low windows, which are divided by heavy mullions and transoms. The floor timbers rest upon flat square-headed carved arches springing from columns, the bases of which are moulded in stone. From them arise oak fluted shafts, surmounted by carved caps of a semi-Ionic character. The walls are constructed of ornamental studding and pargetting, less elaborate in character than that which adorns the main front of the building. All this part of the house is early Elizabethan.*

Thus far as to the house itself. Its associations must not be passed over, since through a tradition this unique building has been invested with additional interest. Houses of note are oftentimes made more remarkable by something in their history. In some cases there is a haunted room. In others a marvellous story clings to a particular apartment. The Ancient House has not been haunted, and the tradition can be more satisfactorily dealt with than a ghostly chamber.

Wodderspoon, writing on the discovery of a secret room in this house, says, "There exists in the Sparrowe family a tradition, descending from father to son, that through the agency of one of its members, a zealous loyalist, Charles II. lay some time concealed within this house after the battle of Worcester. Previously to the discovery of the secret room some difficulty had arisen with regard to the locality of the hiding place of the royal fugitive, but the opening of this chamber seems to point to its solution. It is but fair to add that the family are not in possession of any documentary evidence proving the residence of Charles within the habitation, but there is apparently a close yet mysterious connection existing between the Sparrowe family and the then reigning House of Stuart, which might have been of the kind to which allusion has been made. Several portraits of Charles II. are in possession of the Sparrowes, as also of other members of that branch of the Stuarts. The arms of Charles stand on the exterior of the front of the house conspicuously emblazoned, and two portraits of the Monarch and one of Miss Lane are sacredly kept by a member of the family to the present day, as memorials from the hand of Charles himself upon leaving the place. The fact of one of these miniatures being a likeness of Miss Lane, the heroic deliverer of the Monarch from the perils of captivity, is, we conceive, a proof added to other evidences of probability, that partaking the protection of the Sparrowe family Charles sent them his likeness, with that of a fellow contributor to his safety, as an appropriate remembrance of their peculiar service. This Miss Lane was a maiden lady, in the house of whose brother at Bentley, in Staffordshire, Charles II. took refuge, and was conveyed by her (Charles being put in the disguise of a servant) from that place to Bristol. Had Charles presented the likeness of any other lady to the Sparrowes the chain of connection would have been broken. His gift, however, being the portrait of one distinguished by the performance of an heroic act for his safety, it was a proper token of remembrance to be transmitted to a person who had befriended him in equally perilous circumstances." †

* Phipson—Suffolk Archæological Proceedings, Vol. 2.

† Historic Sites of Suffolk.

The Rev. Erskine Neale, an intimate friend of the Sparrowes, writing in 1846 of the Chapel Chamber in the roof of the house says, "This discovery lends strength to the tradition current in the Sparrowe family, that in this excellent old house Charles II. found a hiding place after the fatal field of Worcester * * * There was unquestionably a secret, stringent, and enduring connection between the Sparrowe family and the reigning Stuart dynasty—a connection impossible to explain otherwise than upon grounds of some marked and definite obligation conferred by the subject and accepted by the Monarch.

"Traces of this connection one stumbles upon at every step. Portraits of Charles II. are in the possession of the Sparrowe family—presented to him by the king himself. Portraits too they hold of various other members of that branch of the Stuart dynasty, and by no ignoble hand. The arms of Charles are emblazoned prominently on the exterior of the old mansion; and of Miss Lane, who took so fearless and enviable a part in the preservation of the Monarch, the Sparrowes hold a miniature, *sent them by the King himself*. Was this to remind them of the similar succour they themselves had rendered to him?" †

We have quoted these extracts because all that can be said in favour of the tradition is here put in the strongest form, upon what might be considered the best authority—that of the Sparrowe family. How far will history and documents at the Record Office sustain the tradition? Did the King come to Ipswich? Of few events in English History have we so full and circumstantial an account as of the flight of Charles II. after the Battle of Worcester (September 3rd, 1651), through Stourbridge, over Cannock Chase, to Boscobel House. "Clarendon's Narrative" was, the author says, written from information communicated to him by the King himself, and collected from daily conversation with Lord Wilmot (afterwards Earl of Rochester) and others who had aided Charles in his escape. The statements of Clarendon, in all essentials, are confirmed by the "Boscobel Tracts." The story of Lord Wilmot's journey from Heale into Sussex in search of a vessel to take the King into France; of Wilmot's and the King's progress to Bristol with Mrs. Lane; of Wilmot's disappointment in not obtaining the vessel that was engaged; of the King's return from Bristol to Trent, and thence to Salisbury and the neighbourhood of Brighton, where he embarked and was conveyed across the Channel, is told in the interesting narrative of Colonel Gunter. It would appear to be established by these records that the King's movements as a fugitive after the Battle of Worcester were confined to the Midland, Western, and Southern Counties. If this be so, the King did not come to Ipswich, and therefore would require no shelter in the Ancient House.

Letters, petitions, warrants, and other documents among the State Papers at the Record Office the great mass of unedited historic materials, the Commonwealth Papers, the proceedings of the Council of State, the records of the Admiralty and other departments have been searched in vain for any intimation that the King in his extremity went to Ipswich for temporary shelter. The result of our own researches is confirmed by Mrs. Everett Green, a high authority, who has spent many years in transcribing, condensing, and calendaring the State Papers of the Commonwealth and Charles II. period. She says: "I do not think it possible that Charles II. could have got to Ipswich after Worcester fight. * * The notices of the escape among the State Papers are connected with petitions from some of the parties (whose name is legion) that claimed to have assisted him. As these were addressed to the King we may presume that they would not contain false statements as to his route. The places named are Boscobel, County of Salop; White Ladies, County of Stafford; Trent, County of Somerset; Charmouth, County of Dorset; Ripley, County of Surrey; and Shoreham, County of Sussex, from the vicinity of which he sailed. Ipswich is quite outside this route."

Thus, neither the published accounts of the flight of Charles II., nor the materials relating to them which have been discovered at the Record Office since the publication of the Clarendon, and other narratives, countenance the Sparrowe tradition.

Does internal evidence supply what external evidence lacks? There is Wodderspoon's

† Stray Leaves from a Freemason's Note Book, by a Suffolk Rector.

statement that "two portraits of the Monarch and one of Mrs. Lane are sacredly kept by a member of the family to the present day as memorials from the hand of Charles himself upon leaving the place." A similar statement is made by Clarke in his *History of Ipswich*. There are various difficulties in the way of accepting these. If the King did not come to Ipswich he could not have given the portraits. If he did come it must have been as a fugitive in disguise, as before he left "Whiteladies" his hair was cut off, his hands and face were stained, and he assumed the coarse and threadbare garments of a peasant. It is not likely that in such disguise he would be incumbered by anything beyond necessities. The presentation of portraits would suggest a triumphal entry rather than a King in distress. One important fact is this. Ipswich was intensely anti-royalist, and at the time the journey is said to have been made a reward of a thousand pounds was offered for the capture of the King. Yet we are asked to believe that, though thus in danger and coming in an assumed appearance, he carried about with him miniature portraits, which would at once have established his identity. Such a want of caution was not impossible, but it is incredible.

Wodderspoon's suggestion that the King sent his likeness seems to have grown out of the difficulty which had to be got rid of. He suggests that Charles, who had accepted the protection offered by Robert Sparrowe, had, when in exile, sent his likeness, with that of a contributor to his safety, as an acknowledgment of services rendered. But a gift, commemorating no less an event than personal deliverance, would assuredly have been accompanied by a letter from the hands of the King. Would not such a letter have been as sacredly kept as the miniatures? Where is the letter? There is no pretence that it ever existed. Another question arises. Would such portraits have been received without an effusive acknowledgment? We know how soft is the heart of man in connection with kingly patronage or kingly condescension. Letters and documents of all kinds sent to Charles II. are preserved in abundance, but no letter of this kind from the Sparrowe family has been discovered.

Again, Charles wrote letters of thanks. One of such is in the possession of the Earl of Stradbroke. Charles, whilst in exile, sent an autograph letter to Sir John Rous, of Henham Hall, thanking him for his aid to the Royalist cause. At the Restoration he conferred a baronetcy on him in acknowledgment of his services. Now the aid afforded by the Knight of Henham Hall bears no comparison with the secret help said to have been given the King by the head of the Sparrowe family. But Robert Sparrowe had neither letter nor baronetcy. The King had many failings, but ingratitude was not one of them. We are, therefore, shut up to the conclusion that there was no letter because there was no obligation to acknowledge.

In October, 1668, Charles II. visited Ipswich, staying, not with the man who is said to have protected him in the hour of his greatest danger, but with Lord Hereford, at Christchurch. The usual corporate deputation met the Monarch on his arrival. Robert Sparrowe was one of the party, but there is no intimation in the Assembly Book that the King bestowed any more notice on him than he did upon other members of the deputation. If under an ever-memorable obligation, would he have forgotten him?

There are other difficulties in the way of accepting the tradition. At no period of English history were the people so divided into factions as during the struggle between the Parliament and the Monarchy, 1643-9. Between Cavaliers and Roundheads it was sometimes war to the knife. For many years the head of the Sparrowe family for the time being had taken a prominent part in the public affairs of Ipswich. Most of them had been enrolled as free burgesses, several had been chosen as portmen, as bailiffs, and one had represented the borough in Parliament. Such a family would most assuredly have taken its side in the struggle between King and Parliament. If at this era the residence of Robert Sparrowe became a temporary place of concealment for Charles II., its owner must have been among the staunchest of the Royalists. When the fact of such concealment became known, he would have been almost idolised by the adherents of the King. What evidence is there that Robert

Sparrowe and his father were supporters of the Royalist cause? Very little. Clarke, in his "History of Ipswich," gives a list of the bailiffs of the borough; and Wodderspoon, in his "Memorials," starts his list from an earlier date. From these lists it appears that no member of the family was elected bailiff from 1645, in which year William Sparrowe served the office, till after the death of Oliver Cromwell in 1658, when Robert, his eldest son, was chosen. Before we began to investigate this matter we had been led to believe that, as Royalists, the Sparrowes had declined to accept office as chief magistrate of the borough under the Commonwealth, and that it was only when the Restoration became probable that Robert Sparrowe consented to be made bailiff.

There is another point which must not be eluded. Carlyle and others have shown that during the Civil War the leading men in Ipswich were decided Anti-Royalists. When the Eastern Counties' Association Committees were formed for the purpose of carrying on the war against Charles I., and of seeing that the Parliamentary cause suffered no damage by lack of money or otherwise in this district, the Bailiffs of Ipswich sat on the Suffolk Committee, not in their private, but in their official capacity, and the Recorder of Ipswich as well as its Parliamentary representatives were also members of the Committee. Mr. Aldus, Mr. Brandling, Mr. Dunkon, Mr. Gale, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Pemberton, Mr. Puplett, and Mr. Sicklemore, all of whom had served, or were serving as bailiffs, portmen, magistrates, coroners, or treasurers of the borough were on this committee, but the name of Sparrowe does not appear. This negative evidence gives colour to the traditional idea that the Sparrowes were Royalists. Then there is the fact that the arms of Charles II. are emblazoned on the front of the house, and that portraits of the King and other members of the Stuart dynasty by Vandyke and other masters were inside. All this points in a certain direction, but let us see what the evidence amounts to.

To obtain further information, we turned to the Royalist Composition Papers in the Record Office. Of a large number of these there is at present no printed calendar, and as the manuscript indices make no allusion to counties, and only give names, the dusty records must be examined page by page if you would find returns relating to Suffolk. These records, however, are a mine of wealth in relation to the sequestration of estates and the amounts paid as fines by Royalists to the Government of the Commonwealth. From 1643 to 1650 Sequestration Committees existed, whose duty it was to take possession of the lands of those Royalists who had been in arms against the Parliament, and to appropriate them to State purposes. Many Royalists in this county were allowed to avoid sequestration by payment of fines, varying from one half to one tenth of the value of the property, such amounts being graduated according to the activity employed in the King's cause. Large sums were thus wrung from Royalists of wealth and position. Thus Edmund Pooley, of Badley, charged with being in arms against the Parliament, was fined a tenth—£728; Sir John Pettus was fined a tenth—£866 13s. 4d.; Edward Aylmer, of Akenham, in Suffolk, clerk, whose offence was, "that hee left his habitation and resided in ye Enemyes Quarters," was fined a third (being a minister)—£1,900.

These are examples of the way in which Royalists were dealt with by the Puritans, and we might extend them. A large number of Royalists in Suffolk were reduced by the infliction of fines, while others had to endure imprisonment, and some fled from their homes. All Royalists of wealth and position in this county suffered more or less, whilst a few of the nobility, through their continued determination to support the Royal cause, lost their estates by confiscation. A long search over these Royalist Composition Papers for the name of Sparrowe, of Ipswich, was in vain. We found no intimation that William Sparrowe, Robert Sparrowe, or any member of the family was among those who suffered in the way above described. As far as these records go, and no stronger testimony can be offered, the Sparrowe family did not help Charles I. by personal or pecuniary aid, nor were its members fined or imprisoned during the struggle with the unfortunate Monarch.

The facts here point to entirely opposite conclusions. On the one hand the Sparrowe family are shown to have escaped all penalties and were not classed as proscribed Royalists during the Civil War; on the other hand, they are not named as members of Cromwell's Suffolk Parliamentary Committee. Where then was the way out of the difficulty which this state of things presented? Mrs. Everett Green has come to our aid. She says, "The Sparrowes must, I feel sure, have taken the Parliament side in the Civil War, or I should find their names in the Indices I have made of those who advanced money, whose estates were sequestered, or by whom compositions were paid." This induced further research in the Great Court and Assembly Books of the Ipswich Corporation. We began with 1645, in which year a member of the Sparrowe family was elected one of the bailiffs. An examination of these Books soon convinced us that the theory that the Sparrowes refused civic dignities because they were Royalists was untenable. Mr. Bailiff Sparrowe had for brother magistrates in 1645, Mr. Brandling, Mr. Cage, Mr. Puplett, and Mr. Pemberton, who were also members of Cromwell's Eastern Counties Association Committee. Considering the hostile feeling which then existed between Cavaliers and Roundheads, the fact that William Sparrowe was chosen to administer justice in Ipswich whilst the four magistrates elected to serve with him were enthusiastic Parliamentarians, is, to say the least, strong evidence that one member of the Sparrowe family, and he the father of Robert Sparrowe, was *not* at the time of the Civil War a Royalist.

It is, however, with Robert Sparrowe that we are more particularly concerned. His father was in the Puritan camp, but it does not follow that the son adopted his father's views. On the contrary, perverts from the family faith not unfrequently emphasize their departure by effusive demonstrations. Robert Sparrowe, it will be remembered, is said to have himself received from the hands of the fugitive Charles the celebrated miniature portraits. His political views will, therefore, furnish a solution of the problem.

Robert Sparrowe was the only son of William Sparrowe by his first wife, Mary, daughter of Mr. John Laney, Recorder of Ipswich. The date of Robert's birth is unknown, but he was baptized in St. Lawrence Church, April 2nd, 1629. His father was married on the 29th of April in the previous year, died November 22nd, 1647. At his death, Robert Sparrowe had not attained his majority, and this created an obstacle when he desired to become a free burgess, as will be seen by the first notice of him in the Great Court Books of the Ipswich Corporation. The minute, 12th March, 1649, says:—"Mr. Robert Sparrow, son of Mr. William Sparrow, deceased, made request to be admitted a free burgess of this town for a reasonable fine, on the ground that he was born but not christened at the time that his father took up his freedom. And although bound by indenture as an apprentice to his father, he was prevented by the decease of his parent from fulfilling the contract, and was only able to serve five out of the stipulated seven years. The Court took a favourable view of the case, and for the reasons given agreed that Mr. Robert Sparrow be admitted a free burgess, and that the fine should be only ten shillings. This concession was gratefully accepted, and he was then and there sworn. Mr. Sparrow, in addition to the payment of the fine, made a donation of two shillings and sixpence for the use of the Hospital, and declared that he had neither sons nor apprentices."

The Bailiffs and Justices present as free burgesses at this meeting were strong partisans of Oliver Cromwell's. The court could easily have refused Robert Sparrowe's request, instead of which he was admitted on the payment of a nominal fine, and members of the Puritan party treated him as an ally rather than as an opponent.

On the 21st January,* 1650, Robert Sparrowe married a daughter of John Parker, gent., of Reigate, by whom he had a large family. At the earlier period of his career he attended neither Great Court nor Assembly Meetings. But he was recognized as a rising man, whom

* The additional MS., 15,520, in the British Museum, gives a different date in same year. Our date is taken from the family pedigree, now in the possession of Mrs. Marshman.

the municipal leaders in the town desired to enlist in their ranks. On the 8th September, 1651 (about 8 or 10 days before Charles II. is supposed to have been secreted in the Ancient House), he for the first time as a free burgess presented himself at a Great Court. A large number of burgesses and four of the portmen, Mr. John Brandling, Mr. John Smythies, Mr. Manuel Sorrell, and Mr. Jacob Caley were in attendance. Mr. Peter Fisher and Mr. Robert Duncon were elected bailiffs. Robert Sparrowe was nominated one of the chamberlains—an important office, as the income and expenditure of the corporate body passed through the Chamberlain's hands—but he requested to be discharged from this office and agreed to pay a fine of ten pounds. The Puritans were all powerful in the borough, and were not likely to elect a Royalist to one of the chief offices in the Corporation, nor to risk the chance of such an one becoming a power in the borough.

Great wealth or unusual ability may have been the cause, but whatever it was the fact remains that the Burgesses seem to have determined to confer on him—Robert Sparrowe, all the honours at their disposal. When very young he was made a Governor of Christ's Hospital, a borough auditor, alderman of the Guild, a feoffee of Tooley and Smart's Charity, one of the Four-and-Twenty (or Common Council), and lastly portman, and bailiff. The office of Alderman of the Guild was not agreeable to his taste, and he paid a fine of twenty nobles to be discharged therefrom. He sought to be released from the duties of a common councilman, but the Court declined his offer of a fine. This was in April, 1653. On September 8th, 1658, five days after the death of Oliver Cromwell, he was elected portman, as well as one of the bailiffs. After this date he took a prominent part in the government of the town.

Briefly we have thus sketched the municipal career of Robert Sparrowe. Happily the Corporation Records do not leave us to imagine and conjecture his political opinions. The extracts from them already given leave a strong impression that he, like his father, ranged himself on the side of the Parliament. Positive evidence strengthens that which is circumstantial.

In the Assembly Book the following minute will be found :—"16th November, 1658. Ordered that the humble Representacion of the Bailiffs, Portmen, Common Counsell and Ministers of the Towne of Ipswi^{ch} now Read shall be p'sented to his highness the Lord Protector. And that the same shall be p'sented by Mr. Bailiffe Sparrowe, and that he shall have his charges borne by the Towne." Not only was the corporate body strongly puritan when Robert Sparrowe was chosen as Chief Magistrate, but he was selected to convey to Richard Cromwell the homage and congratulations of the people of Ipswich on his succeeding his father as Lord Protector of England! Is it probable that a man who had offered concealment to Charles II. after the battle of Worcester would a few years later, as the representative of a body largely influenced by the Puritan party, have offered homage to the young Protector?

The question, however, may be asked if Robert Sparrowe was in full and hearty sympathy with the Puritan party, what made him shrink from taking his share in municipal duties during the memorable years 1650-7? The Ipswich Corporation books are comparatively barren of information respecting his career during the years named, and to obtain an answer we again searched the unpublished documents at the Record Office. Aided by an expert our labours this time were fully rewarded. Among the State Papers, Commonwealth period, 1651, there is a letter dated Ipswich, signed by Robert Sparrowe and William Hamby, which throws a flood of light on the position of the former. It will be well to glance at the events which caused it to be written.

Shortly after the death of Charles I. Cromwell determined to raise a new tax by way of fine on the adherents of the exiled family. The Royalists, strong in numbers and in rank, were irrepressible. They had been put down, had been severely fined, and in some cases dispossessed, but they were ever active, and only waited for opportunity to raise their heads

and restore, as they hoped, their cause. The partizans of Charles II. were constantly collecting arms and money that war might be commenced at any moment in different parts of England. To put an end to this the Protector divided England into twelve districts, in each of which he established a local militia for the purpose of maintaining the peace and repressing Royalist plots. This militia was composed of staunch adherents of the Commonwealth. Each district was entrusted to the command of a Major-General, who was enjoined to obtain the co-operation of local men as commissioners in every county. These commissioners were empowered to summon before them any person whom they should consider disaffected towards the Government and require them to give an account of themselves or their property. They were at the same time authorized to receive information from other quarters, and by that means, if needful, correct the misrepresentations of the principals. Disobedience rendered the offender liable to imprisonment at the pleasure of the Protector and Council of State. By this plan the assessment of Royalists was easy to execute, and the Major-General and his trusty commissioners proceeded to a valuation of the means of the Cavalier party. The tax imposed upon Royalists to meet the cost of this organized force was a tenth part of their income. Only those whose landed property produced less than £100 yearly or whose personal estate was under £1500 in value were exempted from the tax.

A general register of those who were known to be hostile to the Commonwealth and attached to the Royalist cause was kept in every county, and none of these persons were allowed to visit the capital without sending information to the Registrar of their place of temporary abode and intended movements. It was what we should call police surveillance of a suspected class, who Cromwell said were incessantly threatening the State with new dangers, and he considered it only just that they should pay the cost of the necessary means for its defence.*

The documents found among the dusty folios at the Record Office show that Robert Sparrowe, at the very time he was said to have sheltered Charles II. in the Ancient House (September, 1651), was holding a lucrative office under Oliver Cromwell's Government. He was one of the before-mentioned commissioners for the assessment of fines on the Royalists and the sequestration of their estates in the County of Suffolk. Can anything be more destructive to the theory of the Royalist tendency of the Sparrowe family during the Civil War? Here is a copy of one of his letters as a commissioner.

"Hono^{ble},

"According to y^e Letter of the 29th of August, wee have caused our Agent to deliver the Sumons, wee Received the Examination inclosed. Inclosed will informe the pticular times And Places of Deliv^{ry}, As also the Reason of the non Deliv^{ry} of these inclosed. Our Request Is, that if they pay in their Monyes vppon Simons, yett our Agent may be remembered. For it cost him the Rideinge of Five Dayes to finde the pties out.

"Dated att Ipswich,

"22nd of September, 1651.

"This letter is addressed

"Yo^r Servants,

"Will^m Hamby.

"Robert Sparrow.

"To y^e Hono^{ble} y^e Comissioners

"For Advance of Money,

"Sittinge at Haberdashers'

"Hall, these present,

"London.



"6^d."

The examination referred to in the above letter as being enclosed runs as follows:—

"The Examinacon of Mordecai Gifford, of Ipsw^{ch}, in the County of Suff., Gentl., Taken

* Guizot's Life of Cromwell.

vppon oath before vs, beinge Comissio^{rs} for Seq^{con} wth in the said County, the 22th day of September, 1651.

"Hee saith hee left A Sumons from the Hono^{ble} the Comissio^{rs} for Advances of Mony, dated the 29th of August, for John James to pay in his 20^{tieth} pte on y^e 29th of Sept. Instant; hee left it wth William Westly, his Servant, Att the howse of S^r Richard Winckfield, att Easton, in this County, where y^e said James doth vsually reside, on y^e 16th day of this Instant September.

"The like Sumons he left for Sir John Pettis wth Henery Horsman, his reputed Servant, att S^r John's Howse att Cheston, on y^e 17th of this Instant September.

"The like Sumons hee left for Edward Pooly, Esq^r, wth his Maid Servant, at the house of Sir Henery Crofts at Saxtra, where the said Mr. Pooly now Sourjourneth, vpon the 18th of this Instant September.

"The like Sumons hee left for Mr. Thomas Stanton wth Mrs. Garrard, of Cannum in this County, where y^e said Mr. Stanton now Sourjourneth, on y^e 19th day of this instant September.

"The like Sumons he left for Mr. Edward Rokewood wth Elizabeth Grindall, his Maide Servant, att his howse at Ewston, on the 19th of this instant September.

"The like Sumons were left for S^r Fredericke Cornewallis, K^t, wth the lady Bacon, his moother, Att Culford, on the 18th of this Instant September, who hath all the Estate of the said S^r Fredericke in her hands, hee beinge reported to be beyond sea.

"He further sayth for the other two Sumons Inclosed, he cannot heare of the said pties att p^rsent, y^e said Richard Whitinge beinge now a Pirate att Sea, haveinge, after his Composition, as this examinant is Informed, sold his Estate.

"And for Anthony Buckingham or his Brother, this examinant cann heare of noe such, there beinge no such Towne in Suff^k as Dedham, menconed in y^e said Sumons.

(Signed)

"MORDECAY GIFFORD."

Again, among the Thurloe State Papers in the British Museum, there is a letter to Oliver Cromwell, dated Bury, November 20th, 1655, from the Commissioners for securing the peace of the Commonwealth in the County of Suffolk. This document, after extolling the means adopted by the Protector for the preservation of peace, and praising the scheme by which the Royalists alone were made to bear the cost of the special organization enforced, says, "We acknowledge ourselves bound to bless God, who hath moved your highness and Council's heart to be thus careful of the security and care of the good people of this Commonwealth, and of those their dear liberties, purchased with the price of so much precious blood and vast expense of treasure. We do pray that as the Lord hath been pleased to make use of your highness as the instrument of our deliverance from that implacable generation of men, so that he will be pleased further to use your highness as the instrument of our preservation and further reformation, which shall be the daily request of

"Your highness' most humble Servants."

This letter is signed by more than twenty well-known residents of Suffolk, headed by Thomas and George Barnardiston, and among the names stands that of Robert Sparrowe.

A few more facts from the Record Office relating to Robert Sparrowe and we have done. He was appointed one of the Parliamentary Commissioners for imposing taxes on the Royalists throughout the County of Suffolk, May 6th, 1650, and was probably sworn in at Ipswich, as he took the oath before Mr. Nathaniel Bacon (author of "The Annals of Ipswich"), at that time Recorder of the Borough, and Mr. John Brandling, J.P. How so young a man as Robert Sparrowe secured so advantageous an appointment, or even whether it was made by Act of Parliament or by warrant of Council, we could not discover. John Gurdon was Member for Ipswich, and as he was in the February of that year elected a Member of the Council of State, the appointment was most likely gained through his recommendation. To this office there was no fixed salary, the commissioners being paid by a per centage on the actual receipts, and the delinquents were made to pay the amount. The rate fixed was sixpence in the pound, and as

the fines were heavy, the appointment was lucrative. Prior to Robert Sparrowe's nomination difficulties in obtaining the per centage were not unusual. To remove them an order was issued in 1650, by which delinquents could not obtain their discharge from sequestration until the sixpence in the pound was paid. This per centage was afterwards doubled.

Wodderspoon in his "Memorials" says that among the valuable paintings in the Ancient House was a portrait of Captain Robert Sparrowe—captain of the train band. In the Assembly and Great Court Books of the Ipswich Corporation, Robert Sparrowe is sometimes described as Captain Robert Sparrowe. The Domestic State Papers at the Record Office show that on the 22nd April, 1650, a commission was granted to Robert Sparrowe to be captain of a troop at Ipswich. At the same date Mr. Brampton Gurdon was made colonel, and Mr. John Moody major of the troop. Brampton Gurdon was well known for his activity on the Parliament side, and John Moody became Major-General of the district.

With this our story ends. Romance becomes such a house. It imparts flavour to its history. But the tradition which has had a respectable career vanishes. In saying good bye to it, we may be pardoned if we express the hope that light has been thrown, not only upon the position of the Sparrowe family, but upon the political proclivities of the borough, at a period when the liberties of Englishmen were endangered.

Leaving pedigrees to genealogists, we briefly glance at the career of the Sparrowe family, whose history for nearly three centuries is linked with this Ancient House, and also with that of the Corporation of Ipswich. No other family can boast of so long a connection with the governing body of this borough. The John Sparrowe, who figures first in the Annals of Ipswich, was elected one of the portmen as well as joint treasurer in September, 1537. Three years after he was elected bailiff, and in December, 1541, he was returned as one of the representatives of the borough in the Parliament which met at Westminster, 16th January, 1541-42—a Parliament which became noted for securing to its members the privilege of freedom from arrest, and for having, a few days after its assembling, passed the Bill of Attainder which sent Katharine Howard, the fifth wife of Henry VIII., to the scaffold. Payment of members was a recognized principle at this period of our history, but this must not be taken as detracting in any way from the wealth or position of the John Sparrowe referred to, as Edmund Daundy was M.P. for the borough not many years previously, and Thomas Seckford a few years later. This John Sparrowe was a son of Thomas Sparrowe, of Somersham, Suffolk, a small estate on which the family had long resided, and had furnished victims for the rival houses of York and Lancaster at the battles of Hexham and Bosworth Field. John Sparrowe was not re-elected for the borough, but continued to give his aid in the government of the town, and, in 1545, was chosen as one of its magistrates, who were then appointed annually. Robert Sparrowe, son of this John Sparrowe, was, in the year 1540, during the bailiwick of his father, made a serjeant-at-mace, showing that such office was held as an honour in the reign of Henry VIII. This same Robert Sparrowe became successively one of the chamberlains, one of the twenty-four men, treasurer, coroner, portman, and bailiff.

For several generations the head of this family invariably filled all the corporate offices in succession, and sometimes two of its members were at the same period among the leaders of the corporate body. John Sparrowe, who died in 1762, was distinguished by being bailiff no fewer than thirteen times. He also had the honour of receiving from George I. a handsome acknowledgment, in the shape of a fine portrait of the Monarch, in return for attentions received during his visit to Ipswich, and for presenting to His Majesty a certain confectionary composition of large dimensions called a "Marchpane." He had the honour of kissing hands with George II.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the leading members of this family were among the business men of this district, some of them being described as drapers, and others as grocer or mercer. John Sparrowe, who was Bailiff of Ipswich, and whose will was proved in

1558, is described therein as a yeoman, having a residence in Offton and land in Somersham. His father, Thomas Sparrowe, is described in such will as "husbandman," but this term must not be taken in the literal sense of the present day. Robert Sparrowe, a portman of Ipswich, who died in 1594, is described as a draper. On the 13th December, 1599, George, son of Mr. Bailiff Sparrowe, was buried at St. Lawrence, Ipswich. On a brass, formerly in the church, he was described as a citizen and grocer, of London.* In 1659 John Sparrowe, a draper, issued one of the Ipswich Tokens, which bears his name and occupation. Robert Sparrowe a few years previously had also issued a Token.† There was a "Drapers' Hall" and a "Cloth Hall" in Ipswich, and a large portion of the population were engaged in the manufacture of cloth. The charitable benefactions of the time testify in the strongest manner to the wealth of those engaged in the wool and cloth trade.

Whatever their occupation, there is abundant evidence to show that the head of the Sparrowe family at various stages of its career was as celebrated for his wealth as for his corporate distinction. Some members of the family resided in the town more than thirty years prior to their occupation of the old house in the Butter Market, and the Robert Sparrowe who purchased it of Mr. Copping was a son of the John Sparrowe who was M.P. for Ipswich in 1541. His successor, who lavished so much money on the embellishment of his dining room, the year James I. ascended the English throne, must have been a wealthy man. In the Corporation Records of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, indications of the wealth and position of the Sparrowe family are of frequent occurrence. When the Judges came to Ipswich in 1690 Mr. Sparrowe had to accommodate them, and if a member of the royal family, or any person of eminence, visited it, Mr. Sparrowe was expected to perform the duties of host. The nineteenth century dawned before the decline of the Sparrowes in wealth and corporate power.

The family have not however run on in unbroken line. On the 7th January, 1723, Mr. Robert Sparrowe, who became the head of the family, gained his freedom of the borough by apprenticeship to Mr. Thirkle. William Sparrowe was in 1822 admitted to the freedom of the borough by presentation. The last of the male line, Mr. John Eddowes Sparrowe, who died in 1860, took up his freedom May 8th, 1811, being entitled to it through serving articles to Mr. Simon Jackaman, solicitor, of Ipswich. Had these men been qualified descendants of the portman of 1537, or the bailiff of 1659, they would probably have claimed their freedom in right of birth.

The Church Registers of the parish of St. Lawrence give no information as to the marriages of the Sparrowe family—Mary Sparrowe, who married Austin Parker in 1632, and Richard Sparrowe, who married Judith Fisher on the 6th of February, 1653, excepted. They, however, contain numerous entries of baptisms and burials. On the vault in St. Lawrence Church, in which their remains were placed, a quaint inscription was written—

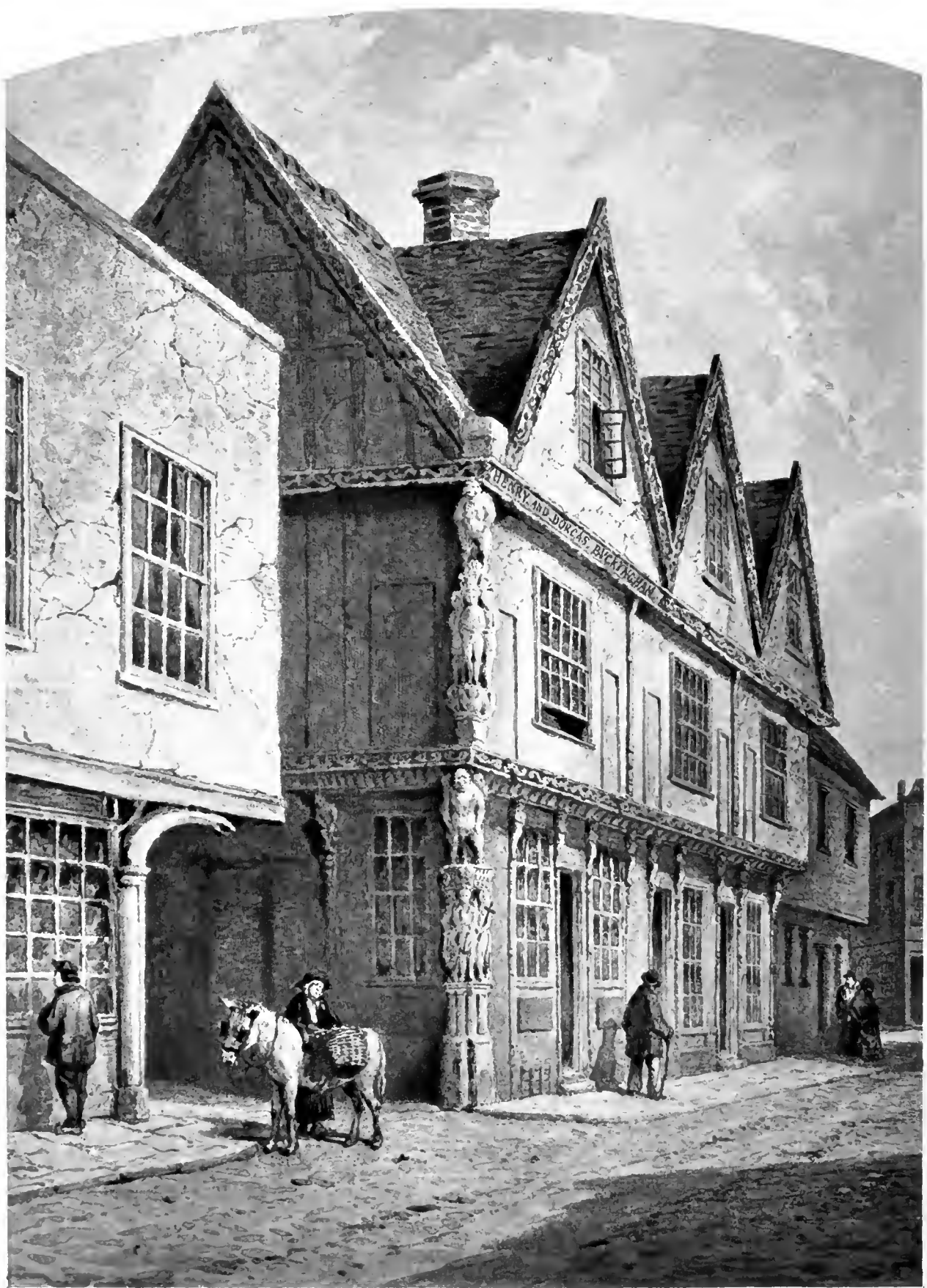
"NIDUS PASSERUM."

"The Sparrows' Nest." A merry conceit, on what to some people is a gloomy subject, implying that here the sparrows, the old birds and the young, securely nestle!

* Nichols' "Topographer and Genealogist," 1852, vol. 2.

† Golding's "Coinage of Suffolk."





Auto Gravure.

The Old Coffee House, 1815.

OLD COFFEE HOUSE

AND CARVED ANGLE POSTS.



IN the middle, and even towards the close, of the eighteenth century Tavern Street was a picturesque thoroughfare. Gable crowded upon gable; of stiff trimness there was very little. Want of uniformity in height and size was so marked a feature that in some parts of the street each house seemed to have been built from plans which agreed with none other. The view from the Cornhill was pleasing; the other end of the street was narrow, somewhat crooked, and, for vehicles, dangerous. Whilst one wonders how our forefathers could have so built, he involuntarily admires even where his comprehension may be at fault. We have said that Tavern Street was picturesque, and we may add that the most picturesque structure in it was the "Old Coffee House," an illustration of which accompanies this paper. This house was a fine specimen of the half-timbered town residences of the middle of the sixteenth century. At the commencement of the present century it still stood as one of the most charming examples of ancient domestic architecture in Ipswich, rich as the town then was in that respect.

The house occupied a site in Tavern Street, at its junction with Tower Street, on the Eastern side, and was a relic of which the town might well be proud. The position was favourable to its reputation. Then, as now, Tavern Street was a principal thoroughfare, and in those quieter days no travelling artist, no lover of the picturesque, could pass this old house without being touched by its mute appeal. One can but regret its disappearance. Commercial developments and consequent improvements are almost certain to involve the sweeping away, or dismantling of their beauty, the creations of past ages. That such a house as this could not remain an abiding monument of art and utility, it may be urged, is not so much the fault of the day, as of those who provided Ipswich with intricate streets and narrow lanes. All the same, whilst bowing to possibly imperious necessity, one would have liked to have preserved so interesting a link between the present and past. It would have displayed the influence which foreigners had in forming the once prevailing taste. The old class of Merchants and Burghers did not higgler over items. To them good work and ornamentation had a charm. Such embellishments of domestic architecture attested alike their taste and wealth.

Let us look more closely at this structure. It presented a long frontage, broken into three gables, upon Tavern Street, and had a considerable depth in Tower Street. It was of three stories. The ground floor was solidly constructed of the local red brickwork, with bonding upright timbers at intervals. Above this was a projecting principal floor, and over this, in the gables, were spacious attics. These upper stories were faced with plaster. All the leading vertical and horizontal lines were emphasized by richly carved woodwork, to which we shall presently revert.

The house, which seems originally to have been in one occupation, became divided into three tenements, each having a gable, and a separate entrance. Each division was of irregular formation. Owing to this system of sub-division, many a house in Ipswich to-day is of mysterious outline, innocent of symmetry, and suggestive of adaptation roughly carried out. We may trace here a social change. The salient feature and glory of the "Old Coffee House" was the elaborately carved post at the South-west angle. This projected to a considerable distance on to the footway, and was carried to the hipping of the gables. It was ornamented with tiers of full length human figures, more than half life-size, in four stages, two to each story. These were carved in wood, doubtless oak, for no other material would so well have stood the effects of weather and time, and incidental ill-usage. The composition showed on each floor a group of three figures, so arranged as to occupy the corner on both the South

and West sides, and above these a single grotesque figure. All were executed in high relief, and spoke well for the carvers.

Beginning at the ground level, there was a chamfered plinth carrying four dwarf cylindrical columns, rudely squared at the base. Upon this pedestal, some four feet from the pavement level, stood three draped female figures, evidently representing the three Graces, Faith, Hope, and Charity. Contrary to custom, the group commenced on the right hand with Faith, who was represented as wearing a hood. The figure inclined forward, bearing in her arms above the shoulder level a Latin Cross. The central figure, Hope, grasped in her drooping right hand the Anchor of Assurance, while her left forefinger was raised and her face turned towards Heaven. To the left was Charity, drawing to her side an infant closely entwined in its arms, whilst a child of somewhat larger growth clung to her tightly-fitting garments. The group was excellently conceived, well balanced, and the idea most skilfully and artistically worked out.

In odd contrast with this group, and separated from it by a triple band of carving, with a shield marking the angle, the heraldic device of which at the time of examination was obliterated, was a rude grotesque figure of a Bacchanalian Satyr. This was in the nude, and of well-developed proportions, having a boy's head, a rotund figure, and the lower limbs of a goat. The arms were placed akimbo on the hips, the forehead was surmounted by short curly hair, and the face wore a smiling expression. Above either shoulder was a winged cherub. This figure filled up the vacant angle in the woodwork, and completed the treatment of the ground floor.

On the first floor the ornamentation was broken by the horizontal cornice line, and was continued by a moulded and banded dwarf pedestal. On this, standing on separate rounded cushion-shaped supports—possibly a fantastic form of shield—was a second group of three figures, less distinct and more enigmatical. Mr. Wodderspoon describes them as a female figure supported on each side by men habited as Burghers, but more probably they were intended to represent the three masculine virtues—Fortitude, Vigilance, and Courage. The central figure stood with folded hands and slightly raised right knee and heel, an attitude suggestive of the "at ease" of the drill sergeant. Above these figures was what resembled a trophy—a *chevaux de frise*; the shields seen in the lower group being here absent. Surmounting this was a second unclad corpulent grinning Satyr, whose broad and brute-like shoulders were thrust into a beam of the roof.

The lower story next Tavern Street was, as already stated, of brickwork and timber, which was painted, and the very wide windows, which were common to the house, were flat double hung sashes. Beneath each of these was a slightly projecting rectangular block of unpainted brickwork. The window frames of common deal, with large oblong panes, were evidently eighteenth century insertions. Indeed from the treatment of the brickwork it is probable that the whole of this ground story was originally of lath and plaster, supported by half timbering, which broke it into panels. Some of the old quartering, with the interstices between the timbers filled in with brickwork, was to be seen on the Tower Street side. Each of the slender upright posts which were left between the windows was capped by an angle bracket, consisting of a grotesque torso, resembling an uncouth figure-head of a coasting vessel.

These brackets, all of which seem to have been diversely carved, acted as caryatides to support a rich carved cornice, connecting the projecting joists of the principal or first floor. The cove was divided alternately into plaster and wooden panels, and the corbel table above was filled with a running ornament, on which scrolls were carved in relief, the ornamentation being probably vine leaves and clusters of grapes, or oak leaves between, as in other examples in the town. Between the windows, the first floor front was plastered in blank panels, somewhat similar to the treatment of woodwork at the Ancient House in the Butter Market, and elsewhere. It is extremely probable that the alterations of windows, and restoration of ground floor, date from the period when the house was divided.

Marking this story from the attics above was a second cornice flat in section, and

decorated with the vine leaf and clusters of grapes. The front of the house to Tavern Street was an exception to this. There the ornamentation was ruthlessly cut away and replaced by this inscription—HENRY AND DORCAS BVCKINGHAM. Such inscriptions were not uncommon on Elizabethan Houses.

Over the second cornice just referred to rose the three gables, the fronts of which were of plaster, and ornamented with barge boards beautifully decorated with the flowering vine ornamentation. The Tower Street end, contrary to the general custom, was the most elaborately treated. The half-timbering was shown, cutting up the surface into rectangular spaces, and a second barge board, with carved edge and piercings between, was set beneath the other, adding greatly to the richness of the effect. The roofs were covered with a small reddish-brown tile. Behind the steep-pitched roofs rose a chimney of modern construction.

While half-timbered houses of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries are to be met with in other parts of England besides East Anglia, very few examples are known in which the ornamentation compares with that of the structure now under notice. That which most closely resembles this "Old Coffee House" is the "Market House" at Hereford, bearing the date 1621. Formerly it was the end of a middle row, but the hand of improvement has left it the solitary occupant of the Market Place. Disfigured by posters on the end gable, and littered with the miscellaneous odds and ends of a second-hand furniture showroom, it yet retains much of its ancient picturesqueness. Like the Ipswich building it has three stories and three gables, the latter having deep barge boards carved with the familiar vine leaf, and without either hip knobs or pendants. The return gable at the end of the house, as at Ipswich, is more highly ornamented, and on the first floor over the shops are bay windows of exceedingly light projection filled with diamond quarries. This indicates the original treatment at Ipswich. The pitch of the roof is nearly the same, and from it springs a brick chimney. The half timbering, as usual in the West of England, is more pronounced than in East Anglia. Allowing for the three score and ten leagues which separate the towns, the general resemblance is close, but there is none of the quaint carving that was to be seen on the Old Coffee House.

The question will probably arise, what is the date of these old carvings?—for, fine as the house was in many respects, the carved Angle Post was its great and distinguishing feature. Before assigning any specific date, it will be necessary briefly to examine the building in detail by the light of cotemporary work. Too much care in this respect can hardly be exercised, as the usually assigned dates for buildings are exceedingly vague, and so remote that the practical archæologist must sometimes be amused by appeals to his credulity. Thus "Clarke's History of Ipswich," 1830, speaks of the carvings under notice as "curious relics of our forefathers' taste, three or four centuries ago,"—a sufficiently indefinite speculation.

Taking first the Carvings, their undeniable grossness, and even vulgarity in certain details, must not lead us to ante-date the work. The later carving is usually more refined than the earlier, and though at first sight these figures approach in vigour, breadth, and coarseness of treatment the stone carvings of the twelfth century on the eaves of Kilpeck Church, Herefordshire, and the capitals of columns in Canterbury Cathedral crypt, yet allowance must be made for the grossness of the Elizabethan era, as well as for the taste of the carver, or his patron. Without such caution an early date might be assigned to some of Hogarth's far more indecorous paintings, executed but a century and a quarter since.

Looking at the house again we remark that the roofs are of somewhat high pitch, indicating a moderately early date, as from the Tudor era to that of Queen Anne the lines of roof were steadily becoming flatter, in accordance with the gradual predominance of the horizontal lines of Renaissance over the vertical lines of Gothic Architecture.

Barge boards were introduced in the fourteenth century, chiefly in domestic work, and were placed in front of and below the gable, to cover the ends of rafters and edges of tiling. In early work they were pierced and had free verges, but at a later period we find them finished with straight edges, kept solid, and decorated with a single vine leaf carving as in the

example before us. In seventeenth century work they are more varied and elaborate in treatment than in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but are less boldly and deeply cut. The figured brackets beneath the cornice are not usual in seventeenth century work, but are common at earlier periods. On the other hand, there were no square-headed, four-centred doorways with spandrils fitted with carvings, the upper story does not project to any great extent, and there is an absence of bay windows, though this is possibly due to alterations. Reviewing all the points we come to the conclusion that the "Old Coffee House" was erected in the middle of the sixteenth century.

The carved Angle Post is not a common feature in those timbered dwellings which yet survive in other parts of England. In Ipswich, however, there were some of a character somewhat similar to that under notice. Indeed, the town may be said to have been largely enriched in this respect. Fuller, in the seventeenth century, spoke of the number of wealthy merchants' houses in it. The situation of these is suggestive, significant alike of social changes and of individual taste. In many parts, particularly in the neighbourhood of the river, you may trace remains of former wealth. Mansions are not now erected in the busiest part of the town. Only a few years ago remains of fine old houses were numerous in the vicinity of what is now the Dock. Some of our forefathers were men of taste, which they had the means to gratify. Corner Posts bore evidence of this. These posts were covered with fanciful or allegorical designs. Nor was internal carved work wanting. In the lower room of a merchant's house at the corner of College Street, and opposite the "Sea Horse," stood a chimney piece wrought in a style similar to the carving at the Old Coffee House. Upon pillars in bold relief were male and female figures in the attire of the time. The round cap, the slashed doublet and breeches of the men, the stiff collars, long dresses, and hanging girdles of the women, bespoke the Elizabethan type. This house disappeared under the hands of the builder in 1849.

The removal, half a century since, of a shop front on the premises occupied by a Mr. Butcher, in the Butter Market, revealed an interesting specimen of a story post, which formed a jamb of a doorway, with lintel and a small window above. This post was about eight feet in height, and was rich in bold and effective carving, divided into four panels, with a shield as a sort of centrepiece. The upper panel was filled in with a rose, the well-known Tudor badge. Immediately below this was a sharply-cut figure in the picturesque costume of Henry VIII., playing a fiddle. The figure may have represented a wandering musician or a bear warden. The lower panels bore, one a bear, the other a dog, both rampant. On the lintel, which was much defaced, was the monogram, "T. S." This remnant of ancient architecture found a sympathetic custodian in the person of the late Mr. R. M. Phipson.

At the corner of a house occupied in 1830 by Mr. James Conder, not far from the above, was a massive decorated post, on which, some eight feet from the ground, were beautifully carved figures, symbolical of some apochryphal incident. Originally they must have been fine specimens. In decay they were eloquent witnesses of taste and skill.

In a yard which gave access to the Quay from Fore Street, St. Clement's, there was, in 1846, a fine gable post. On the face towards the street was the figure of Queen Elizabeth, crowned, holding a sceptre; on that towards the Quay an armed male figure, with the visor of his helmet down. On the front was a scroll, on which were three lions. Surmounting this was the word "Mars." Above one figure was an heraldic shield; above the other, an indecipherable monogram. Upon the decoration of this post much care was evidently bestowed.

Among existing examples on a smaller scale may be mentioned a post in Northgate Street, at the entrance to Oak Lane, leading to the Church of St. Mary Tower. On the upper part of this is represented Vulcan at his Forge; on the other is a female head, which may be that of Venus. Below the figures is an enriched scroll, ornamented with griffin heads in the style of the Renaissance. In comparatively early days monastic life had its caricaturists, who were restrained by little delicacy for the feelings of those they satirised. At the South angle of the "Half Moon," at the junction of Foundation and Lower Brook Streets, is a post, on the

upper part of which is represented the time-honoured fable of the Fox and Geese, as typical of the Monks and Laity. The old Monastery of the Black Friars was on the opposite side of the street, and that was the grievance! The original owner of the house would be gladdened could he be told that his caricature outlived the Monastery; that, whilst the post remains to attest his hostility, the Black Friars have disappeared, and that it, not they, attracts attention even to this day. Ornamented posts still exist on houses at the corner of Bell Lane, in Carr Street, at its junction with Cox Lane, on St. Margaret's Plain, at the corner of Soane Street, and in St. Nicholas Street, at the Silent Street corner (a house thought by some to have been the residence of Wolsey's father), but the tooth of time has in each case destroyed some of the characteristic carving. On a house in Lower Orwell Street, at the Fore Street end, there is a fine figure of a Satyr, bold and projecting. This originally formed the top figure to the Angle Post of the old house, which is even now rich in carved woodwork.

At Lavenham there is a large house, formerly used as the Guild Hall, which is decorated with much tracery, the vine leaf predominating. At one angle, under a canopy, is the full length figure of a man clad in military costume. In style, treatment, and character this carving approaches closer than any other known examples to the figures on the Angle Post at the Old Coffee House. Another carved post may be found in Cross Street, Sudbury; and at Bristol there is a coarsely executed specimen. In Bailey Lane, Coventry, is one of the finest extant. It is covered with carving divided into rectangular panels, filled with tracery. There and in most instances, except at Ipswich, a naturally curved piece of timber is used, and forms a stop to the projecting cornice. There occurs to us no other example of continued carving of the Angle Post, in stages from pavement to roof level, than in the Old Coffee House.

Wodderspoon speaking of this old House says—"In the Great Court Book, of the Corporation, under date 17th March, 2nd James I (1604), is the following entry:—'Henry Bvckyngham shall have a lease of the houses adjoining to the Tower Churchyard from Lady-day next for 100 yeres, at £26 8s. yerely rent.'" Bacon in his 'Annals' makes no mention of such a lease at the date given, and an examination of the Great Court Books revealed Wodderspoon's error. The lease was granted to Buckenham on the 17th March, 1614, instead of 1604, and the rent was fixed at twenty-six *shillings* and eight *pence*, and not £26 8s. Instead of the Old Coffee House this lease doubtless refers to small tenements at the rear of that building, which are said to abut on to the "Churchyard of St. Marie tower." Wodderspoon having apparently determined that the entry in the Corporation Books referred to the fine old House itself, felt that the rent named was so inadequate that it must be a slip of the pen, which he ought to correct, and therefore substituted pounds for shillings. There need have been no mistake here, as in 1648 this property reverted to the Corporation through non-payment of rent, and it was leased to Henry Girling on the same terms as before, viz.: a yearly payment of twenty-six shillings and eight pence.

Who was Henry Buckenham, whose name appeared so prominently on the front of this old house? He was a man of good position, as his residence indicated; a Burgess, who obtained his freedom by apprenticeship, and was admitted in 1601, declaring that he had neither apprentices nor children. In 1612, and again in 1621, he was made one of the governors of Christ's Hospital. In 1614 he was discharged from being Guild Merchant on his paying a fine of ten pounds. In 1608 he was churchwarden of St.-Mary-at-the-Tower, and the extempore and fervent preaching of the Rev. Samuel Ward, known as "Watch Ward," drew so large a number of hearers who were not parishioners, that to provide extra accommodation Mr. Buckenham and his brother churchwarden, Mr. George Raymond, erected at their own cost a gallery on the North side of the church, receiving, as compensation for the outlay, seat-rents from such non-parishioners as desired to sit in the "severall roomes and seates" so comfortably prepared for their use. In 1617, Mr. Raymond being then deceased, Mr. Buckenham agreed, for the sum of thirty shillings paid to him by the parishioners, to relinquish all his rights and interest in the said gallery, simply reserving to himself a seat in it for the remainder of his life.

At what period this unique house was converted into a place of entertainment under the guise of a coffee house we have no evidence to offer. It appears from an assessment of the parish of St. Mary-at-the-Tower that in 1689 the "Coffee House" was entered on the Rate Book, and that it had many "Inns" as neighbours. The Corporation from an early date exercised the privilege of granting licenses. This privilege was used with such strictness and so jealously was the liquor trade watched, that no tradesman selling wine or liquors was eligible for the office of Bailiff. In addition to this, licensed innkeepers were required to find sureties to indemnify the town for any expense arising from illegitimate children which might be born in their houses, and in 1567 a Committee was appointed by a Great Court to look after such of the inhabitants or travellers who loitered in ale or tippling houses. According to "Bacon's Annals" there were only three licensed vintners in Ipswich in 1568, but in 1575 the Bailiffs increased the number of wine licenses, and agreed to issue 20 licenses for inns and ale houses. In the Record Office there is a return of the inns, taverns, and ale houses in England, 1574, apparently just before the Bailiffs increased the number of licences. Therein we find that Ipswich had fifteen inns, four taverns, and two ale houses, making a total of 21 refreshment houses. The County of Suffolk as a whole had 97 inns, 65 taverns, and 287 alehouses. The Return illustrates the social habits of our forefathers in different parts of England. Thus bustling Northampton, like Ipswich, had four taverns, but it had also 39 alehouses; the Primate's City, Canterbury, had four taverns and 22 alehouses; mercantile Boston, one tavern and 27 alehouses; ecclesiastical St. Albans, two taverns and 26 alehouses. If this return may be relied on, it indicates the wealth and exclusiveness of the population of Ipswich. The people were wine drinkers when claret and Rhenish wine could be obtained at 3d. per pint, and hock at 6d., ordinary drinking ale being sold at two quarts for a penny.

Coffee houses and their associations were popular in London, and that at Ipswich was doubtless established as much to afford a lounging place for gossip, for reading the "News" and playing at cards, as for coffee drinking. It is even said that the sober-minded and the lounge resorted to the Old Coffee House, where they sipped their favourite beverage, and at times refreshed themselves with a nap, over the dull journals of the day, whilst the favourite Coaching House, the "Old White Hart," hard by, with its spacious parlour and its sanded floor, was the rendezvous of the more convivial, the free and easy of the place being better suited to their carousals. In those days "Hotels," as we know them, had no existence, and a stranger coming to Ipswich took private apartments, and had to resort to a tavern, or to an ordinary, for his dinner.

In 1767 the Coffee House, then the property of Mr. Josiah Harris, an auctioneer and cabinet maker, and known as Dod's Coffee House, was offered for sale. It was described as having coffee, tea, card, and dining rooms. The Assembly Room (now used as the Reading Room of the Working Men's College), let with the house, had been built about fourteen years, for which term the house had been let on lease. For balls, concerts, and public meetings this fine room had been a great accommodation to a large number of persons, but it was less profitable to the proprietor than he anticipated. To prevent the property being diverted from its public use, a number of gentlemen united for its purchase, and it was conveyed by Josiah Harris and his wife to ten persons in equal shares, one of them being the Rev. Richard Canning, minister of St. Lawrence. After the shareholders had obtained possession Daniel Bamford, a man who figured in a variety of ways in connection with this class of trade, became landlord. He occupied the Coffee House in 1771, in which year an information was laid against him for allowing billiards to be played in his house. He was convicted, and the Justices, who were the guardians of public morals in Ipswich, ordained that his recognizances be forfeited, and that he be disfranchised as a Licensed Victualler for the term of three years. The case, however, was removed to the Court of King's Bench, and the conviction was quashed. A few years later Bamford removed to the Great White House (it had not then risen to the dignity of an Hotel) and shortly after announced that he had fitted it up "as Hotel, Coffee House, and Tavern."

After a lapse of 30 years the Old Coffee House was again sold. The shares had changed hands and got sub-divided. When Mr. John Cobbold purchased the property in 1798, for the sum of £1,350, more than half the shares were in the hands of Mr. Trotman, the brewer, and Mr. Kerridge, the banker. When sold to Mr. Cobbold the house was called Alderson's Coffee House, but at the commencement of the present century it became known as Prigg's Coffee House, a noted place for billiards, the landlord apparently having no fear of a prosecution for gambling. All high-class balls and concerts were given at the Assembly Room, which was let in connection with this Coffee House, and became the resort of the gayest of the gay. At the present day few persons beside those who take part in them, and their immediate friends, attend fashionable balls. At the commencement of the century a different custom prevailed. Ladies, whose dancing days had passed some thirty or forty years, looked upon a Race Ball or a County Ball as the most agreeable dissipation of the year. It gave them the opportunity of gossiping with old friends, when travelling was difficult; of seeing the aristocratic people of the county; of speculating, whilst they watched the dancers, as to probable matrimonial engagements; of exhibiting their best dresses, as well as the old lace for which some of the spinsters and dowagers within the charmed circle—which was almost as select as "caste" in India—were distinguished; or of having a quiet rubber of whist. On these evenings, hackney coaches were in demand, but many lady residents would accept no other conveyance than the cozy sedan chair, a kind of hand cab carried by two men, whose appearance was rendered picturesque by the wearing of cocked hats and rather conspicuous liveries. This chair had its usefulness at a time when ladies' hair was dressed in such a style as to render the least derangement fatal to an imposing appearance. Men of fashion entered the ball room in those days with powdered hair, nicely adjusted curls, coloured cloth coat, lined with satin, embroidered waistcoat of satin, black silk shorts, white silk stockings, full shirt frill, lace ruffles, and silver buckles. Men in such costume were equally glad to avail themselves of a conveyance which landed them under cover in the vestibule of the Old Assembly Room. The sedan chair survived until recent years in unprogressive towns. Ancient dowagers, comforted by the "sweet simplicity of the three per cents," stuck to them to the last.

Lady Harland, on her way to a County Ball at the Old Coffee House, lost a diamond earring, which, if found, was not restored. George, Prince of Wales, graced the Old Coffee House by attending one of these balls. The man whose tailor's bills amounted to ten thousand pounds a year, charmed several ladies by dancing with them that evening, and delighted a much larger number by the fascination of his smile and the elegance and gallantry of his manner.

In 1817, when the front of it was sliced off, this house was shorn of its beauty. Very few persons are living who remember its appearance; a large majority of the present generation have never even heard of its existence. Yet which of our old buildings could fairly claim as much notice, whether for its picturesque beauty or its unique associations?

As one looks at the engraving, the question arises, why was so charming an example of sixteenth century work sacrificed? Why was so picturesque a specimen of domestic architecture demolished? Did the end justify the means, or was its demolition a piece of that iconoclasm which, under the guise of improvement, has led to the removal of so many ancient buildings from our midst? The facts are these.

At the beginning of the present century that part of Tavern Street—extending from Hatton Court to Northgate Street—was very narrow. On one side stood the White Horse Hotel, on the other directly facing it, the Post Office. The width of the street here was only nineteen feet, and of this width, a portion on each side had to be appropriated to foot passengers, leaving only a very narrow way (such as that which most of the inhabitants remember at the east end of the Butter Market, before it was widened) for vehicular traffic. The inconvenience thus occasioned naturally augmented as the traffic increased, and accidents so often occurred that the spot was considered dangerous. With one exception, every structure in this part of the street was a shop, and ladies who went shopping, or those who had to wait

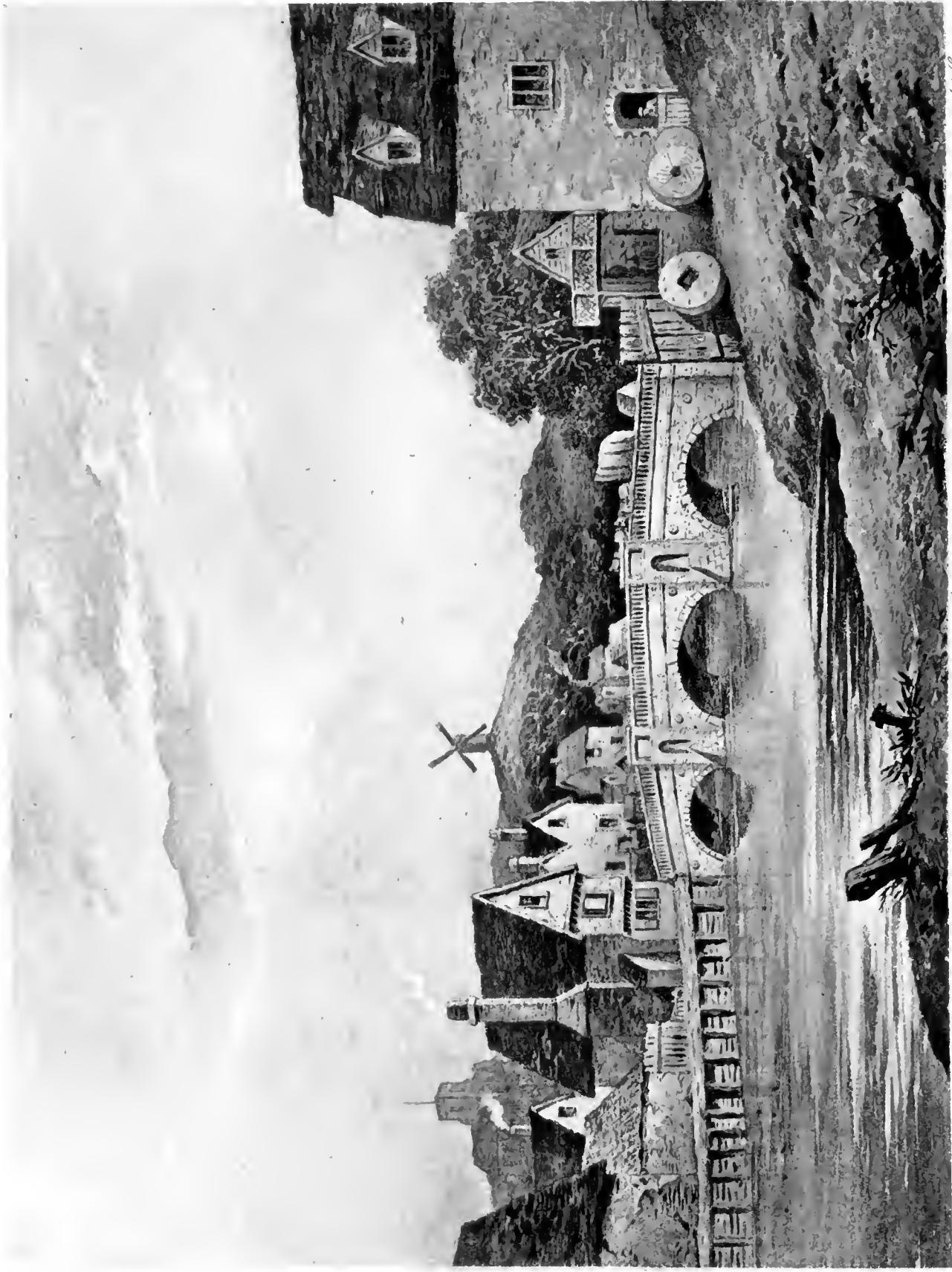
whilst a friend entered the Hotel, were painfully embarrassed by the probability of being overturned. So notorious in this respect had this part of the town become, that many persons from the country avoided it, by driving along the back road from St. Matthew's Street. Travellers who posted from London or Colchester to Yarmouth, or any place on the route, followed this example, and by changing horses at Copdock White Elm passed through the town without stopping. At the Post Office Corner, where the four streets met, that portion of Tavern Street which was available for carriage traffic was only twelve feet wide, and at Hatton Court the space was almost equally limited.

The shopkeepers who lived in this narrow way felt that the diversion of traffic was a serious impediment to business, and they became urgent in their demands to have the street widened. Three of them being owners as well as occupiers offered to give up, without compensation, such portions of the entire frontage as were required for the widening process, provided their houses were re-fronted and put into tenantable condition. Imposing shop fronts were not then conspicuous in Tavern Street, and most of the houses on the north side were very low, with overhanging jetties.

The following sums were eventually paid to the owners and occupiers of the premises for what they surrendered :—Mr. Brothers, hatter, £650 ; Mr. Pipe, shoemaker (for self and another), £900 ; Mr. Brett, shoemaker, £350 ; Mr. Skoulding, confectioner (for self and another), £600 ; Mr. Meadows, £620 ; A. H. Steward, Esq., for Great White Horse, £1,100 ; Mr. Brooks, tenant of White Horse, £100. The Lessees of the Assembly Room accepted £30, upon Mr. John Cobbold agreeing to the alterations and compensation offered. The Surveyors, Messrs. Brown, Catt, and Doughty, were to receive 6 per cent. on the £6,500 agreed to be spent.

It is evident that thus far the Paving and Lighting Commissioners, by whom the plan was brought forward, were justified in making the improvement at the East end of the street. But why they continued the widening process to the corner of Tower Street is not so clear. The street at this portion was much wider than at the East end, and to obtain a uniformity of line on the North side seems to have been the chief motive for dismantling one of the finest specimens of ancient domestic architecture that Ipswich possessed. The inhabitants were not then alive to the importance of preserving memorials of the past. According to the published report of the public meeting called to consider the proposed plan, not a word was said on behalf of the old Jacobean front, the removal of which so many lovers of the picturesque have deplored. It has been truly said that commerce is not governed by sentiment, and it was, no doubt, thought that, so long as a widened thoroughfare was secured, regard for the handicraft of a past age could be dispensed with. And thus a building of great archaeological interest, a memorial which threw light on the history of art in our town, a link which would have connected the present with the past, was ruthlessly destroyed in order that a few inches of ground should be added to a footway !

It is curious to note, that what would now be considered a very small matter for corporate deliberation, was at that date a serious financial question. The estimated cost of the projected improvement in Tavern Street according to plan agreed upon by the Paving and Lighting Commissioners was £6,500. Towards this sum the Commissioners had about £2,000 in hand. Alluding to the expense, the Chairman of a public meeting which was held to consider the matter said the alteration was so necessary that to it he trusted no objection would be made, but as the expense was great, he suggested that it might be carried into effect by degrees. It looks as if very economical ideas prevailed in those days, for at the same meeting it was incidentally mentioned that the sum of £100 was annually expended in sweeping the streets, and Mr. Mileson Edgar, a good man of business, thought that even this moderate sum was £30 a year more than was necessary !



W. G. G. G.

Stoke Bridge, 1790.

THE BRIDGES.



THE existing Bridges in Ipswich are modern, and are not of such a character as to have taxed to any great extent the mechanical ingenuity or the engineering skill of the day in which they were erected. One can see that they were built for use rather than ornament, an economical standpoint probably preventing the combination of the two essentials in a good structure. Public spirit was not so easily evoked a century ago as it can be now. Money could not be so readily obtained, and there was a tendency to make shift which the present generation would not have tolerated. Hence such erections as Bourne Bridge and Handford Bridge, which, as far as public accommodation is concerned, are a disgrace to the nineteenth century. The present Bourne Bridge replaced one of historic type and great architectural merits. Though erected probably in the reign of the first Edward of England, it was as good for traffic as that which rose on the same spot in the reign of George III. What follows treats of the Bridges in detail. As historic structures they naturally occupy a place in these "Illustrations of Old Ipswich."

STOKE BRIDGE.

EIGHT hundred years ago a Bridge leading from the town of Ipswich to the Hamlet of Stoke was in existence. It was deemed of sufficient importance to be named in the Inventory, known as Domesday Book, made by order of the Norman Conqueror. Whether it crossed the Orwell at the spot occupied by that of the present day, there is not sufficient evidence to determine. At a Great Court held in Ipswich, 1378, an order was made that the rent of a tenement in Cook Row, formerly the property of William Malyns, which had become forfeited to the Corporation, was in future to be applied to the repairing of St. Peter's Bridge, and it has been conjectured that a Bridge at one time led from Whip Street to St. Peter's Dock. It must not be forgotten that, although called Stoke Bridge, the present structure is entirely in the parish of St. Peter, and evidence as to any other Bridge in this locality giving access to the hamlet of Stoke has not been found.

At a very early period in the history of Ipswich this Hamlet was an important district of the town. The best means of access to Ipswich for all traffic coming from the Samford Hundred, via Bourne Bridge, would be by a route over the Orwell somewhere near St. Peter's Church. That the Bridge, wherever it stood, was much used and in consequence an object of care on the part of the town authorities, is evident from the numerous entries in the Borough Records relating to it, and the aid given to it, at different times, by private individuals. Thomas Ailverd, one of the Coroners of the Borough, who died in 1300, left by will the sum of twenty shillings yearly out of lands in the parish of Stoke, and ten shillings yearly from tenements, for the maintenance of "the Bridge." John de Caldwell, one of the public-spirited men of his age, seeing the necessity for improved accommodation, offered in 1435 to have a Bridge to the hamlet of Stoke constructed at his expense, providing the inhabitants of Ipswich would pay pontage. His offer, it seems, was not accepted, for repairs to what was most likely a timber structure were frequently needed, and the stability of that structure oftentimes a matter of doubt. In 1477 an order was made at a Great Court that carts should not go over Stoke Bridge, and to enforce this the Bailiffs were requested to keep it locked. It is evident therefore that the Bridge was narrow, and that a bar or gate, protected if necessary by a padlock, was provided for the maintenance of the toll keeper's rights. Before the end

of the fifteenth century the Bridge was again extensively repaired, for in May, 1495, it was ordered that "all Carts going over Stoke Bridge lately built shall pay towards the repairing and maintaining of the same, viz., every Burgess 1d. ob., and every forrainer 1d. for ever, provided that none shall goe over the bridge when they may goe through the ffoord."* This shows that there was a Ford passable, not far from the Bridge. Probably the toll bar was kept locked, and the keeper was little troubled by carters or horsemen, except when the tide was too high to permit horses to wade the stream without risk. A toll seems to be referred to in the entry under date September 18th, 1495, "Auditors for Stoke Bridge Mony." The Bridge was re-built at the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, for in 1559 reference is made in the Town Records to the carriage of 28 "lodes" of timber from Whitton to Ipswich for the building of Stoke Bridge, and eight "lodes" of timber from Holbrook.

Where was the Ford? Evidently it was somewhere close to the Bridge, but old maps do not mark its whereabouts. The passage from Whip Street to St. Peter's Dock, which was in a line with the Wherstead Road, in ancient times the regular route from London to Ipswich, was the spot selected for it. With a Bridge that needed frequent repairs, a Ford near at hand was almost a necessity. There are orders in the Great Court and Assembly Books for making passable the roadway through the Channel at this place. Thus in 1670-71 the sum of thirty shillings was paid to John Sharman and Francis Rednall "for clearing the Dock to make a passage through the channell." Later evidence as to the locality of the Ford is to be found in the *Ipswich Journal* for the week ending November 3rd, 1804:—

"Repairs to Stoke Bridge occasioned great inconvenience, as all vehicular traffic had to be diverted to the Ford at St. Peter's Dock." Here "Ford" is used as the ordinary and proper designation of the spot.

According to Wodderspoon, a bridge of *stone* existed between the town of Ipswich and the Hamlet of Stoke two hundred and seventy five years ago; Speed's map of Ipswich published in 1610 shows such a Bridge. It also indicated that a house was erected upon one of the piers on the eastern side of the Bridge. This house seems to have overhung, so as not to intrude upon the space for traffic. It was probably placed there for the convenience of levying pontage. "This Bridge," says the same authority, "according to the map seems to have been erected in a ponderous style, and the arches were of a low and pointed character. It stood with little alteration until the 12th of April, 1818, when in consequence of a heavy flood caused by rain two of the arches were swept away, and the structure was rendered useless."†

We cannot say of what material the Bridge shown on Speed's map of 1610 was constructed. If built of stone, Wodderspoon is wrong in stating that it stood with little alteration until 1818, as Buck's view of Ipswich published in 1741 exhibits Stoke Bridge at that date as timber-built. From the Corporation Records, it appears that very extensive repairs were made to a timber Bridge in 1670-71, and as ten loads of old timber were at that time carted away for use as firewood at Christ's Hospital, it may be fairly inferred that the structure then repaired, or more probably replaced, was of timber also. The sale of 210 lb. of old iron and of only 180 bricks from the old materials, points to the same conclusion.

The following particulars respecting the last named repairs at Stoke Bridge contain matters of much interest alike as to the cost of the Bridge, the value of labor and materials at that date, and the amount of money received by rate.

In 1670-71 during the Bailiwick of Nicholas Phillipps and Thomas Reeve, it was "agreed that a rate shall be made for the payment of four hundred pounds for the repair of the Bridges belonging to the Town, by the Portmen, Thomas Edgar Christopher Milton and the Mr. Town Clerk, the Four-and-Twenty, Mr. Simon Cumberland, Isaac Day, and John Gibbons, and John Wade." So runs the minute in the assembly book of the Ipswich Corporation, and another book among the Corporation Records supplies details as to the amount raised and how it was expended.

* Bacon's "Annals." † "Memorials of Ipswich."

The accounts of John Sawyer and Jonathan Button, Surveyors for Handford Bridge and Stoak Bridge, for the years 1669, 1670, and 1671 :—

RECEIPTS.							£	s.	d.
Received of John Gawdy and John Sayer, Collectors for the first									
Bridge Rate	-	-	-	-	-	-	505	09	08
Received of William Hawes and Thomas Passall, Collectors for the									
second Bridge Rate	-	-	-	-	-	-	238	07	09
210 lbs. of old Iron at 13 <i>d.</i> lb.	-	-	-	-	-	-	01	09	03
For 180 Bricks	-	-	-	-	-	-	00	03	08
							745	10	04

Among the payments made are the following :—

Paid Truth Norris for his timber and work at Stoak Bridge, in full,									
as by his bill appeareth	-	-	-	-	-	-	237	00	00
Paid unto George Allen in full, for Painting of Stoak Bridge							11	10	00
Paid unto John Sharman and Francis Rednall for clearing the Dock,									
to make passage through the Channell	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	10	00
Paid unto Robert Rushford for 5 loads of Gravel at 1 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> the load,									
to lay on the Bridge before it was begun	-	-	-	-	-	-	00	06	08
Paid for Spreading the Gravel and beating down the Cartwracks							00	01	02
Paid unto Edmund Applewhite for 300 of bricks							00	05	00
For 4 bushels of lime and sand							00	01	04
Paid unto Jacob Waithwhaite for one day's work for himself and									
laborer	-	-	-	-	-	-	00	03	00
Paid unto Robert Rushford for the Carriage of ten loads of old									
timber to the Hospitall	-	-	-	-	-	-	00	10	00
For 5 pounds of great Nayles							00	01	08
Paid unto Francis Rednall and John Sharman for putting doune the									
Cartwracks, 12 weeks	-	-	-	-	-	-	00	12	00

An order of Sessions for the repair of Stoke Bridge was in several instances made during the eighteenth century, it having been presented by the Grand Jury as dangerous. When the Brick and Stone Bridge shown in the engraving, as it stood in 1801, was built, we have no evidence to offer, Mr. Batley says that no account of its erection has been found among the Corporation Records.*

During the morning of the 12th April, 1818, the inhabitants of Ipswich were alarmed by a report that Stoke Bridge had collapsed. A heavy rain had fallen on the previous day and during the night. The Gipping overflowed its banks and the marshes for miles along the valley were flooded. It was Sunday morning, and fortunately there was but little traffic over the Bridge. The flood continued to increase and the rush of water gained in impetuosity. Three men were standing on the Bridge intently watching the surging flood as it rushed through the three narrow arches. Unconsciously to the spectators the wash was sapping the piers which retarded its progress, and the impetuosity of the flood was increased by a falling tide. Suddenly the end of the south pier gave way, and with it went part of a centre and a side arch. The three men who had been absorbed by witnessing the seething torrent fell with the debris into the flood. Two of them were saved by means of ropes; the third, unable to maintain the unequal combat, was drowned.

The Bridge which was thus destroyed is the subject of our illustration. Constructed of brick and stone, it consisted of three low arches and four substantial piers; rounded masses of stonework projected into the stream. The outline of the arches was well marked by bold

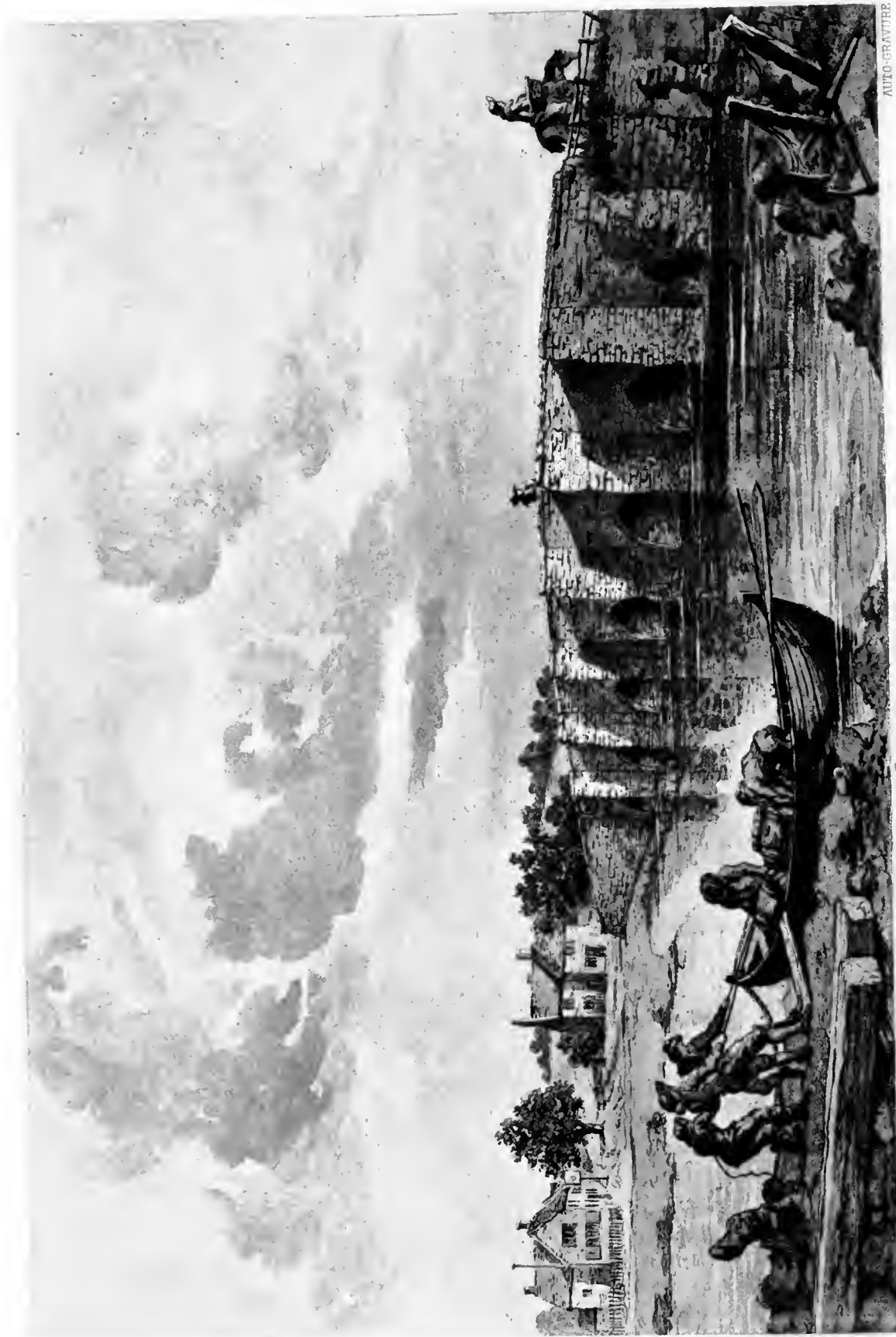
* Batley MSS., British Musuem.

central keystones. Each of the piers was ornamented by a niche, above which was a small rectangular panel. Over each arch a string course ran from pier to pier, and above this was a similarly executed cornice, the two forming strongly marked parallel lines, and relaxing the stiffness of the outline of the Bridge. Through each of the spandrils of the arches an iron rod had been run from side to side, and was tied in on either external face by a circular cast iron boss. The piers were connected above the string course by a parapet and a series of turned stone balusters, thus forming one of those open balustrades that were frequently seen on Bridges of the 17th and 18th centuries. The piers were bulky and wide, the arches were low and nearly circular in outline. The absence of lateral supports, the limited extent of waterway provided, and the constitutionally weak form of arch adopted, all contributed to the instability of the Bridge. Taking the drawing now re-produced as our witness, a heavy flood and a gale of more than usual intensity were only needed to ensure the sudden collapse of the structure.

The morning after the startling catastrophe the Bailiffs and Magistrates of the town assembled to consider what steps should be taken to repair the mischief. Public accommodation and economy had to be studied. Fortunately they called to their aid Mr. William Cubitt, Civil Engineer, who was then employed by Ransomes & Sons. That gentleman advised the immediate construction of a temporary timber Bridge in a line with the yard of the White Lion Inn, to enable foot passengers to cross the river without the trouble of a ferry boat, and a floating Bridge formed of barges for vehicular traffic across the river from St. Peter's Dock. These suggestions were adopted and so promptly carried out that the floating Bridge was in use in less than four weeks from the fall of the old Bridge. This floating Bridge so well served its purposes, that loads of timber weighing nearly eight tons passed over it without inconvenience or injury. To enable vessels and barges to pass the Bridge was opened every tide for an hour before high water for the passage of barges *going upwards*, and for one hour *after* high water for those going downwards. The bargemen upward bound lay to as near the Bridge as was convenient till the time for passing, and those downward bound made fast to a buoy just above the broken Bridge, there to wait their turn. Of course barges which came up too late had to wait for the next tide.

Mr. Cubitt was also requested to prepare plans and estimates for a new structure. He advised the use of iron, and in accordance with his plans a Bridge of one arch, 60 feet in the span, constructed of cast iron, with abutments of brickwork, faced with Scotch granite, was thrown over the channel. The estimated cost was £3,850. Under his vigilant superintendence a Bridge with a roadway $22\frac{1}{2}$ feet in the clear was built. Its strength and durability have now been tested for seventy years. There has been no impediment to traffic and no serious call upon the pockets of the ratepayers for repairs.

Turning to the engraving, on the bank to the right of the Bridge is a Water Mill, timber-built and plastered, with a grindstone resting against the wall. At a very early period in the history of Ipswich the hamlet of Stoke was celebrated for its Mills. One belonging to the Monastery of St. Etheldredra of Ely was long afterwards held by the Prior and Convent of Ely. The Domesday Survey mentions one, and frequent references to the Town Mills on both banks of the stream occur in the Municipal Records throughout the middle ages. Under the paternal Government of those days the inhabitants, upon pain of fine and forfeiture of a portion of the grain, were compelled to bring their corn to the Town Mills to be ground. The miller in his turn was restricted as to charge. Only a certain toll could be taken, and he was cautioned not to mingle inferior produce with grain brought to be ground for food. The Old Water Mill on the town side of the Bridge, which existed within the memory of persons living, was the most noted of these Town Mills. It was long known as Rainbird's Mill, Mr. Laurence Rainbird having been for many years a tenant of the Corporation; and is described in the Chamberlain's Accounts as "Stoke Mill." A century ago it was let with some Marshes at an annual rental of £65. Mr. Joseph Fison was the last lessee.



AUTO-GRATUIT

Bourne Bridge 1780.

BOURNE BRIDGE.

THIS is a border Bridge, partly in the Borough and partly in the County parish of Wherstead. The waters of the Orwell wash under it and form a kind of lagoon to the west. The date at which a Bridge was first erected here is unknown. The earliest mention of one occurs 1352—3 (Edward III.). The Bailiffs of Ipswich, when perambulating the boundaries of the town, rode from the Bull stake, on the Cornhill, to the middle arch of Bourne Bridge.* The allusion to the middle arch shows that at that period the Bridge consisted of an unequal number of arches, and probably this was the Bridge with seven arches which remained till nearly the close of the eighteenth century.

In the closing years of the sixteenth century, and early in the seventeenth century, frequent repairs were made to the Bridge at the cost of the town, according to the requirements laid down by an Act, passed in 1517 (Henry VIII.). Thus in 1554 the Bailiffs and Justices, according to Statute, named Assessors for the "reparacion" of Bourne Bridge, and Collectors were appointed in every parish. In September, 1578 (Queen Elizabeth), the Bridge was ordered to be repaired at an estimated cost of £150. Up to this date the boundary line between the town and the county, and the responsibility for maintenance and repair, do not appear to have been well understood. In 1580, a conference between the town and county magistrates was held on the spot, to inspect the repairs then in progress, when they reported in writing, under their hands and seals, how far the town and how far the county was chargeable, and directed the same to be put on record. The boundary line thus agreed to has ever since been recognised. In the years 1610, 1624, and 1671, and at other periods up to the year 1757, the town repaired its part. In the last-mentioned year it was repaired under a contract, and under the inspection of a Surveyor.

In 1785, advertisements appeared in the *Ipswich Journal*, from Mr. Collett, Clerk of the Peace for the County, and from Mr. T. Notcutt, Deputy Clerk of the Peace for the Borough, notifying that on the 29th day of August the Bridge would be impassable until further notice. Horses and carriages, it was stated, might pass with safety through the river at low water. Mr. Thomas Fulcher, Surveyor, of Ipswich, who was engaged to superintend the repairs, was empowered to put out the brickwork and agree for its performance. On the 18th of the following November another advertisement appeared announcing that the repairs were finished, and that Bourne Bridge would be passable for carriages "on Monday, the 21st instant." In eleven weeks therefore those repairs were completed. The payments made to Mr. Fulcher on the part of the Borough amounted to £85.

The ancient Bridge with its seven pointed arches of unknown antiquity is gone. When did it cease to exist? We found on attempting to collect evidence on this point that the question was more easily asked than answered. The minutes of proceedings at the County Quarter Sessions for the last century, wherein such facts would be recorded, are not, it seems, in existence, and the Borough Records enable us to give only an approximate idea as to the date. It would appear that the repairs to the old Bridge executed under the supervision of Mr. Thomas Fulcher were not of much value. The *Ipswich Journal* for September 9th, 1786, contains a notice to the public showing the hours on each day of the forthcoming week at which carriages could pass through the river at that spot with safety, a proof that the Bridge in less than twelve months after the repairs had again broken down.

Among the Records of the Borough we found that at the Sessions held 15th March, 1790, the following bills were ordered to be paid:—

	£	s.	d.
For Stone and Gravel at Bourne Bridge - - - -	6	5	0
For Paving by Mr. Elliott at Bourne Bridge - - - -	7	16	0
For balance of Messrs. Gowing & Selsby's bill - - - -	199	9	7½
For Messrs. Clinchin's Bill for Stone delivered at the Bridge - - - -	141	18	6

* Bacon's "Annals."

These items (one of which is balance of bill) being paid for work done to the Borough portion of the Bridge only, prepared us for the statement made by Mr. Batley in his MSS. notes on Ipswich, that in 1786 the Bridge was reported by the Surveyors, specially appointed to examine its condition, to be in so ruinous a state as not to admit of substantial repair. It was therefore taken down and the present one built, the Town and County sharing the expense of the new structure in their due proportions. * This testimony from a gentleman who was Town Clerk of the Borough of Ipswich at the very period, viz.: 1784 to 1790, seems to be conclusive as to the date at which the old Bridge was removed. An examination at low water shows that much of the squared masonry of the old Bridge was re-worked into the lower portions of the new.

The old Bridge, which we believe was taken down in 1786, was originally roughly but substantially built. It was carried upon seven arches, between each of which and projecting outwards was a narrow buttress, constructed to withstand the pressure of the rising tide on the one side, and the land water and occasional floods on the other. The arches were four centred and pointed, and the key stones forming the actual face of the arches were ornamented with a double row of moulding. The vaulting of the arches was perfectly plain, the stones having a uniform smooth surface. The pitch or rise of the Bridge was much less than usual in mediæval work of this character, the abutments or land supports were skilfully treated so as to provide a gentle approach. The Bridge was extremely narrow, and a serviceable parapet, nearly breast high, following in most cases the heads of the buttresses, provided a number of recesses as places of safety for foot passengers. Standing by these time-worn parapets and looking eastward a charming view of the sylvan scenery of the Orwell is obtained. On the west the landscape is also picturesque.

Among the documents in the Muniment Room of the Ipswich Corporation are two Indentures of Agreement for the repair of Bourne Bridge that are worthy of note, as they connect the "Freemasons" with the repair of the Bridge. One of them was made 21st Elizabeth (1579), the other 7th James I. (1610). The first Agreement is between Sir Robert Wingfield, of Letheringham, Sir Philip Parker, of Erwarton, Thomas Seckford, of Ipswich, Esq., and Philip Tylney, of Shelley, Esq., of the one part, Robert Cutler and three others, of Ipswich, of the second part, and John Knyghts, of Barton, Suffolk, "freemason," and William Knyghts of Crowfield, Suffolk, "freemason" of the third part.

The second Indenture of Agreement is between William Bloyse, merchant, Tobias Blosse, mercer and bailiff, Robert Cutler, gentleman and portman, of Ipswich, of the one part, and Thomas Reynberd, of Stowmarket, Suffolk, "freemason," of the other part. This Agreement witnesseth that for certain payments therein named the said Thomas Reynberd undertook to repair and re-edify and amend in a workmanlike and substantial manner "one halfe of the said Bridge, that is to saie, soe muche thereof as is standinge from the middest of the said Bridge to the furthest and uttermost end thereof towards the said town of Ipswch." The best and the most durable stone adapted to such work was to be used, and the whole to be so well wrought and troweled as shall be thought fitt by suche skillfull workmen of that science of free-masons as shall be appointed to viewe the same by the said William Bloyse, Tobias Blosse, and Robert Cutler.

To some of our readers it will be news to find "Freemasons" acting as Surveyors of public Bridges, and called upon to decide the character of such work. But "Freemasons" at this era were evidently the best workmen that could be found—men who worked on geometrical lines, and only such masons as were well grounded in science were admitted as members of the craft. To this society of men we seem to be indebted for the vaultings which secure our Cathedrals, and to the art of constructing walls to resist the thrust of a stone vaulting. Many agreements similar to the above appear to have been made with "Freemasons" in relation to our collegiate buildings.

* Batley's MSS., British Museum.

The superiority of the Freemason as a workman is shown by the Statute 6, Henry VIII, c. 5. At the date of the contract named above (1510) the wages allowed under this Statute were:—To a Freemason who can draw his plot, work, and set out accordingly, having charge over others, 8d. per day with meat, 1s. per day without meat, whilst the wages of an ordinary mason having charge over others was 2d. per day less. The amount to be paid to Thomas Reynberd for the repairs was, as per agreement, £27 11s. This sum was paid by instalments. By the first agreement the amount to be paid to John and William Knyghts was £150, thus: £50 before Michaelmas Day, 1579, £25 at Whitsuntide, 1580, £25 at Michaelmas, 1580, £25 at Whitsuntide, 1581, and £25 at Michaelmas, 1581.

In 1609, Sir Edward Coke, Lord Chief Justice of England, resided at Wherstead. To him the Bailiff and Burgesses granted a lease of the Mills which then existed on the west side of Bourne Bridge “newly built.” They have long since disappeared.

At a Great Court, held May 3rd, 1788, permission was given to Dame Susannah Harland, her Heirs or Assigns, “to dig, make, pile, and complete a Dock in and upon the land and soil sometimes overflowed and covered with water by the ebbing and flowing of the tide, upon the edge of the river Orwell, at a distance of not less than eighteen yards from Bourne Bridge, on the east side thereof, of such length, width, depth, size, and dimensions, as she or they shall think proper, and to make a convenient hardway by the side of the said Dock.”

The lady to whom this permission was given was the mother of the late Sir Robert Harland, Bart., and resided at Wherstead. She for years prior to this date had a Dock at Bourne Bridge. The old Bridge had suffered considerably through vessels in this Dock drifting from their moorings during a gale, and the Bailiffs and Burgesses made the above-named concession, in order that the Dock might be made at a greater distance from the Bridge, and injuries from similar causes thereby prevented.

A Dock at a distance from the Ipswich Quay existed long before the time of Dame Susannah Harland. In 1605, licence was granted to Robert Gooding, salt finer, to set a post near Bourne Bridge, beneath the full sea mark, about the half flood, in order that he might make a Dock there for the loading and unloading of vessels during the Town’s pleasure, he paying the sum of 12*d.* a year for the privilege. * Documents at the Record Office show that in 1634 Sir Richard Broke, of Naeton, petitioned Charles I. for authority to construct a Dock at Downham Reach, and his petition was granted.

HANDFORD BRIDGE.

At the spot where Handford Bridge stands, a timber Bridge, rude in form, simple in construction, and destitute of the usual accommodation for vehicles, existed from an early period. The stream here was always strong after heavy rains, and then the torrent invariably damaged the road at the foot of the Bridge. In former times the people felt the advantage of even trifling additional accommodation, and the Burgesses in Great Court displayed their good sense by rewarding individuals who were spirited enough to make improvements for the public good. Thus in 1467, William Sewell, for altering the Bridge at Handford so that the king’s subjects might pass through the river with horses and carts, was made a Free Burgess. The Bridge itself, though broad enough for carts, was restricted to the use of foot passengers and horses. This state of things continued in the sixteenth century. In 1562, one Charles Crane, having pulled up the post which prevented carts passing over the Bridge, was taken before the Bailiffs and Justices and fined six shillings and eight pence. What was better, he was compelled to set up at his own expense another post.

Ulverstone Hall, Debenham, a farm belonging to the Corporation of Ipswich, seems to have been well stocked with trees in the Tudor and succeeding age. Thither the Bailiffs of

* Batley MSS., British Museum.

Ipswich went for timber when repairs to public buildings in the town were ordered. Bacon in his "Annals" tells us that in 1619 trees were ordered to be felled at Ulverstone Hall for the repair of Handford Bridge. According to the Batley MSS. the Bridge was taken down in that year and rebuilt, 4d. a night being paid by the Burgesses for keeping watch during re-building. At this date there was a foot Bridge where the seven arches are placed. This was increased in width, and the highway made good between the great Bridge and the little Bridge. A causeway was also made on the right of the highway. This timber Bridge seems to have lasted only half a century. In 1669 over £200 was spent in repairing or re-constructing Handford Bridge. The sum of one hundred and thirty pounds, twelve shillings, was paid to Mr. Truth Norris for timber and work. The iron used weighed 5 cwt. 3 qrs. 8 lbs., and cost £9 11s. 11d. The painting of the Bridge cost £6. Broom, which was used in the roadway, cost 3s. a load; gravel one shilling; and clay two shillings and twopence. Men received 1s. 6d. a day for labour, and George Thirkettle was paid eight shillings a day for work with horses and tumbril. For carting a load of old timber from the Bridge to the Hospital, which was in Foundation Street, the charge was one shilling. These payments were met by a Bridge Rate. This kind of rate was evidently not unusual. In April, 1750, a Bridge Rate of 3d. in the £ was made, and in April, 1753, there was an order of Sessions for one of 6d. in the £. This last-named raised the sum of £208 14s. 0d.

Handford Bridge was so frequently out of repair that it became a source of great anxiety to the Corporate Body, whose property was heavily mortgaged, and they could not therefore raise money for the erection of a substantial structure. At a Borough Sessions in 1747 the Grand Jury made a presentment that Handford Bridge was "so much out of repair as to be ruinous and dangerous for all His Majesty's liege subjects to pass and re-pass over the same." In 1777 a post chaise was over-turned by the impetuous stream at the foot of the Bridge, and two horses belonging to Mr. Manning, of Colchester, were drowned. In 1779 several holes were scooped out in the road by the overflow of the stream. One of these was seven feet deep, and when covered with water could not be seen; a horse whilst fording the stream got entangled with its harness, and was drowned in this hole. This accident stirred up the inhabitants, and a number of them signed a petition with a view of obtaining an Act of Parliament for the erection of a Bridge on this spot and for making in addition a causeway for foot passengers, but the application was made too late in the Session and could not be received. By renewed efforts the road was made passable, but in the following year, through a great overflow of water, occasioned by a sudden thaw, it became nearly as bad as before. In 1791 another timber Bridge was built, but an Act of Parliament having passed for making the river Gipping navigable from Stowmarket to Ipswich the Bridge recently erected not being adapted for such traffic it was taken down and re-built by the Trustees of the Navigation, upon an understanding with the Borough Magistrates of Ipswich.

In the year 1814, the road at the foot of the Bridge being again rendered impassable through damage by floods, coaches, carriages, and vehicles of all descriptions on their way from the London and Hadleigh Roads came no nearer the Town than Handford Hall Farm, but went through the lane on the opposite side, passing by what was then known as "Haxell's Farm," almost parallel with the present Ranelagh and Willoughby Roads, entering the Town from Stoke Hill.

The house attached to the land known as "Haxell's Farm" is worthy of a note. In appearance it was an old Manor House in a decayed condition. One part was constructed of brick of the age of Queen Elizabeth, its other was timber framed of much earlier date, and appeared to be the remains of a larger house. The brick portion, which was covered with lichen and moss, conveyed the idea of an incomplete building which had been designed to supersede the original timber and mud-built fabric. The walls of the garden looking towards the town were loop-holed as if for defence. On the wall of a room in the older part of the house—that probably in which the feasting and revelry of the olden days took place—the following

quaint inscription, painted in black letter, remained as if to attest the antiquity of this part of the building :—

“He that
seteth do
wn to mete
and ; leteth
Grace, pas
seteth do
wn leik a
n ox and
reseteth leik
an ass.”

The house was long known as “New Place,” most likely a contraction of New Palace, because tradition says that on this spot stood a Saxon Mansion in which the beautiful Edith, Queen of the Monk-King, Edward the Confessor, occasionally dwelt. Ipswich was at that time a Royal Burgh and two thirds of its annual payments to the King were granted by him to his Queen, the other third was held by Earl Guert, her brother. We know by Domesday Book that the Queen had a grange here to which a considerable quantity of land was attached, but have not discovered any record relating to this house in the Norman or Plantaganet age. Like many other mansions of the olden time, it underwent a variety of changes after it fell from its high estate. There is a brass in St. Peter’s Church to John Knappe, 1604, who lived at New Place. If the old brickwork of the existing house (enlarged and remodelled it is now known as Gyppeswick Hall) be of late Tudor date, John Knappe must have resided there soon after its erection. In 1737, Thomas Thorrowgood, Esquire, was owner of the property,* and about thirty years later we find an enterprising surgeon and apothecary hiring it as a residence for the reception of patients who were expected to pay handsomely to be inoculated with small-pox. The charge varied from three to five guineas, the patients being supplied with all necessaries, tea, wine, and washing excepted. Patients might have “a relation, nurse, or servant with them by paying half-a-guinea a week for their board.” †

* A small portion of this estate, called “Clay Pits,” and “Hardings Croft,” or “Fursclose,” was, until recently, copyhold of the Manor of Stoke next Ipswich ; the following notes of admissions from the time of Edward IV. till the close of the last century will not improbably afford a clue to the ownership of “New Place ” during that period.
as follows :—

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----|--|
| Edward IV. | | The Lord lets to John Skalfry for 20 years. |
| Edward IV. | 18. | The Lord lets to John Cannon for 40 years. |
| Henry VII. | 5. | John Cannon, his son, admitted. |
| Henry VII. | 7. | John Cannon, the son of the said John, admitted for remainder of term. |
| Henry VII. | 23. | Thomas Reynold, admitted upon surrender of John Cannon. |
| Henry VIII. | 5. | Robert Reynold, admitted on surrender of Thomas Reynold. |
| Henry VIII. | 26. | Robert Right, admitted on surrender of Robert Reynold. |
| Elizabeth. | 34. | Thomas Kempe, admitted on surrender of Robert Right. |
| Elizabeth. | 36. | John Knappe, admitted on surrender of Thomas Kempe. |
| James I. | 11. | Thomas Knappe, youngest son of John Knappe, admitted, but surrenders to his elder brother, John, who is admitted. |
| James I. | 15. | James Palmer, sen., and James Palmer, jun., admitted on surrender of John Knappe. |
| 1659. | | Thomas Thorrowgood, admitted on surrender of James Palmer. |
| 1675. | | John Thorrowgood, youngest son, admitted on death of his father. June 1st, 1693, he surrendered to the use of his Will. He died 1733, Will dated 6th September, 1733. He devises New Place, then in the occupation of Richard Girling, to his eldest son, John Thorrowgood. This son was admitted to the copyhold portion of New Place 6th August, 1734, and died in 1736. |
| 1737, October 17th. | | Thomas Thorrowgood, his only son, admitted. He was afterwards knighted ; was High Sheriff ; lived at Sampson’s Hall, Kersey ; died about 1793 or 1794. His only child and heiress-at-law, Katharine Thorrowgood, admitted 28th May, 1795. She died 1803, Will dated 25th February, 1798. |

† *Ipswich Journal*, December, 1766.

To return to the Bridge. At this period the Bailiffs and Justices went earnestly to work. The necessity for doing something effectual had become imperative. They instructed Mr. William Brown, Architect and Surveyor, to inspect the place, and report without delay upon the best means of repairing the damage, and preventing its recurrence. Mr. Brown advised that the road on the west side of the Bridge should be raised and a small channel cut at right angles with it, across which a viaduct of seven arches should be constructed to convey at any time, but more particularly in case of floods, the overflow from the Gipping into an off-shoot of the Orwell, without damage to the road. Mr. Brown's plans were carried out and time has proved the soundness of his judgment. For although a weir has been made to relieve the meadows during floods, the Seven Arches have proved themselves equal to the demands made upon them. The cost of the work was £1,600.

FRIARS' BRIDGE.

THE Bridge which formerly stood near the present Cattle Market and known as Friars' Bridge took its name from the Franciscan Grey Friars, who were located near the spot. The Priory stood on the bank of an arm of the Gipping, and the stream which passed by it was called by the inhabitants in olden time the Grey Friars' river. Over this stream the small wooden Bridge was suspended, until in 1807 it was superseded by a brick one, which in its turn disappeared when the bed of the stream became occupied by a sewer. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the Bridge was chiefly used as a means of communicating with the Priory, Portman's Meadow, and the Town Marshes a short way beyond. A little house which abutted on to the Bridge was known at the beginning of the present century as Friars' Bridge house.



AUTO-GRAYURE.

The Quay & Custom House. 1875

THE QUAY, THE CUSTOM HOUSE, AND THE PORT.

THE QUAY.



THE earliest mention of a Quay is found in the first of the published rentals of the Holy Trinity Priory, said to have been compiled in the middle of the reign of Henry III., wherein tenants "In Paroch' del Kay" are named, but it does not appear to be referred to in the Corporate Records until in the 9th Edward I. (1281), in the grant of "common soile to Godscalk, nigh the wall at the Kay." In the 14th year of this reign the account rendered by the chief inhabitants of the farme, and included in the Sheriff of Norfolk's accompts in the Exchequer, places the "Customs of the Kay" for the half-year at £10 11s. 0d. In the 14th Edward III. (1341), the Kay, Tronage, and Bermandry were let at an annual rental of £20. In 1344 the rental was £17, and in 1346-8 it had decreased to £10. Prior to this date our "Little Domesday Book" (19th Edward I.) speaks of the custom of the Cay and repeatedly of the "Cay" as a locality,* and a Collector of Customs was appointed for the Port in 1280. It is therefore probable that a Common or Public Quay existed in the early part of the thirteenth century.

Wodderspoon says that "in the 35th Edward I. (1306) Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, and Alice, his wife, died, seized of the Quay at Ipswich." And Bigod's name seems to have been associated with the old "Kay" through succeeding generations, for as late as 1631 a complaint was made in the Court of Chancery by Sir Robert Hitcham, who at that period lived in the town, as to the condition of "Bigot's Kay." †

In 1472 the Quay was in so decayed a condition that the inhabitants had to contribute the cost of its repair. Again in the 16th Edward IV. (1476), it once more needed reparation and the Portmen had to "contribute towards the repaire of the Kay, two lodes of greene broome and 8d. in Mony." And every two Burgesses "one lode of greene broome and 7d. in Mony, and every of the 24th one lode of broome." Other entries show that the repairs thus made were ineffectual. In the following year there was further expenditure for a new crane. A fine of four pounds, imposed upon a Chamberlain deposed from office was applied towards the repair of the Common Quay. Fines upon foreigners (*i.e.*, burgesses who were made free of the town for trading purposes) and moneys collected in a like way were similarly applied. The cost of repairs, however, exceeded the amount of contributions and fines, and a Great Court ordered the Chamberlains to pay the sum of £300 out of the Town Funds to defray the expenses incurred. To meet this an assessment was levied, and Burgesses were ordered to pay up in full before the Nativity of the Virgin, under peril of disfranchisement. ‡

In the General Court Books for the sixteenth century, the growing importance of the town commercially is shown by the attention paid to this locality. In 1540, an order was

* Black Book of the Admiralty II., App. Pts. pp. 161, 183, 185, 187, 205.

† Memorials of Ipswich.

‡ Bacon's Annals.

made for the payment of arrears due for paving it. In the 12th of Elizabeth (1570), it was ordained by a Great Court that it should be repaired and made good with timber at the charge of the town. In 1572, liberty was given to Robert Cole, shipwright, to build a ship upon the common soil of the town called the Old Kay, paying for the town's use, 2d. for every ton of the ship's burthen. In 1582, a committee was appointed for the repair of the Quay in St. Clement's parish, the work to be done at the cost of the town. In 1585 it was agreed that the Assembly should have the power to let the old Kay, and in 1588, after selling a part of the old Kay to John Brenning, the Assembly agreed to lease or sell "the residue of the Kay" to Edward Cage. This shows that the Common Quay, as known to inhabitants sixty years ago, was not in Plantaganet times the "Kay" of the Port, although they would appear to have been adjacent.

We find that the Corporation were firm in asserting their right of tolls whether the Common Quay was used or not. The merchants in Fore Street, having river frontages, naturally desired to have Wharves of their own, but the right to use them was subject to the payment to the Corporation of the Port dues.

There are several grants shewing the creation of these private wharves. In the 32nd Edward I. the Bailiffs and community of Gippewic grant to Peter Douneman a piece of land in the suburb of the town, lying between the course of the salt water on the South and the highway running before the gate of the capital messuage of the said Peter on the North, at the yearly rent of 4d., "taking thenceforth wharfage even as it is meet according to the custom of the said town." In the 2nd Henry VI. William Phelipp, Knt., John Joye, vintner, William Wetherold, and William Haylee, appear as grantees of two pieces of land in the parish of St. Peter, of the said town, in fee farm at a yearly rent of three silver pence, one of the said pieces being described as lying in the parish of the Virgin Mary of the Caye, between the Caye, formerly of John Bryght, on the West, and the salt water on the East.

In 31st Henry VI. (1453) liberty was granted to John Goss "to Kay in the ground he bought of Brazier in the salt water,"* himself and heirs to be held responsible for keeping the same in good repair. In the 15th Henry VII. there is a grant to John Squire, clerk, at a yearly rent of 4d., of two quays lying together in the parish of St. Mary at the Quay, lying between the common soil in the tenure of Margaret Gosse, on the East, and the Common Quay of the said town on the West, with its South head abutting on the salt water.† There are, at a later date, similar grants to merchants, and it would appear that having the right to charge wharfage at their own Quays, the merchants thought that they would escape the port charges. In the 30th Henry VIII. (1539), an order was made that "all strangers comming by water to the Common Kay shall unlade theire Merchandise uppon the Common Kay, paying the Tolls and Customes of the Towne and King, according to the Table in ye Kay house. And noe person shall unlade at any other Kay unless the Toll and Custome shall first be payde."‡

In 1716 this question of Private *versus* Common Quay was brought before the Commissioners of Customs. Alice Wollard was the owner of a small quay where goods from a sloop trading between Ipswich and London were landed without paying port dues. Of this the Bailiffs complained to the Collector of Customs, who had permitted an Officer of Customs to attend at the unloading. The Commissioners of Customs, after considering the evidence offered on both sides, decided that all goods should be landed at the Common Quay, and that the Custom House Officers be requested not to grant certificates as to landing nor to discharge their coast bonds unless their goods were so landed. This stringent decision was due to the Collector of Customs, who reported that "The Corporation of Ipswich having a Charter granted by King John, and renewed and confirmed by succeeding Kings, which empowered them to claim certain duties for all goods shipped and landed at this Port, it has been a custom, time out of mind, especially for vessels bringing down merchants' goods from London to land them at

* Bacon's Annals.

† MSS. of Corporation.

‡ Bacon's Annals.

the Common Quay, where a crane and a convenient warehouse has been erected. For this accommodation the owners of the said goods pay a certain duty to the Town, and the Corporation, in consideration of the same, are obliged to pay a Rent to the Crown of 50 or 60 pounds a year.”*

By a Treasury Warrant issued in the 32nd Charles II., the legal Quay of the Corporation was defined as “All that open space called the Common Quay of the Town of Ipswich, and of rights belonging to the town, extending along the river from East to West about 84 yards, and bounded on the East end with the warehouses of Samuel Carnaby, and on the West end with the warehouse of John Hazelwood.” At the commencement of the present century, the whole of this space, excepting about 20 feet made into “stairs” for the convenience of passengers in small boats, was constructed of red brick and piles 14 feet in height from the ground line to the surface. It was protected by a dwarf fender piling. At distances varying from 6 to 10 feet, there were guide piles placed at a batter of 1 foot 3 inches. A new embanked roadway and quay, 30 feet wide, was thrown up in front of it under the Dock Act of 1837—not before it was wanted—for the work was then reported as being in a very bad state of repair.

THE CUSTOM HOUSE.

The old Custom House, as will be seen by the engraving here given, was a long, low, isolated structure, originally of timber, but patched here and there at various periods with brickwork, standing almost at the north easterly corner of the Common Quay, lastly described. At the commencement of the present century it was dilapidated both externally and internally, and although not finally condemned till 1843, it had for years exhibited marked symptoms of being in a bad way. It consisted of two stories, covered in by a high and cumbrously framed roof. The first floor considerably projected, the front and flank being carried on a colonnade. Along the chief façade, which is said to have extended to 120 feet, the over sailing upper story was supported on a series of eleven stone columns, having caps and bases of the Doric order. The return side on the East was carried by a twelfth pillar, of similar dimensions and style. Between each column the bressumer of the first floor front was upheld by a nearly flat four-centred arch with unusually massive pendant or key block in the centre. Both arch surface and pendant were enriched by incised mouldings and carvings of conventional foliage, whilst a dentilled cornice and cove were placed over the beam. The latter was ornamented by horizontal lines of bead and roll mouldings. The recess, nearly twenty feet in width, formed by setting back the ground story behind this colonnade, was paved with flagstones, and therein the seamen of the Port delighted to lounge. Affixed to the wooden walls at the back were several low benches, the appearance of which indicated pretty constant use during many years of wear. As these faced the river and shipping, this sunny yet sheltered piazza naturally became a favourite rendezvous for retired salts, as well as for the skippers and the able-bodied seamen of the port.

The wooden front of the first floor was lined out and cut to resemble squared ashlar work. This was irregularly broken into by several windows, between the original of which carved strings of fruit and flowers formerly hung. In the centre of this story was a double doorway, and probably here there was at one time a crane. Near the western extremity was a sun dial, and close to it a tall flagstaff was firmly planted in the ground. Over this principal story rose a steep and heavy roof, broken up along the front into five bays, in only one of which was a gabled dormer. The entire roof surface was covered by narrow tiles, large pantiles projecting over the ridges and angles. Gutters were laid in the valleys between the several hips, ending in long spouts, which discharged their contents at the eaves-level, clear of the colonnade.

* Letter Book at the Ipswich Custom House.

The origin of the building and the date of its erection are unknown. In April, 1651, the Bailiffs reported that the "Town House and Customs" (the Port Dues) were let to John Wollfender from March last to Michaelmas next, for £36. "He putting in sufficient sureties for the payment of the same." Its first use as a Custom House seems to date from the Government of Oliver Cromwell (1654-5), when, at an Assembly of the Corporation, Mr. Sorrell and Mr. Ives were requested to view that part of the Galleries at the Town House which the Collector of Customs desired to have, and to report thereon. But no reference is made to the request or the report in the minutes of subsequent meetings of the Assembly. Bacon says that in 1507 "the house at the Com: Kay" was "demised to Sewall for one yere." Nothing is said as to the purpose for which it was demised, but Batley considers that the building referred to was the Town House, afterwards known as the Custom House. He also says that in 1589 a Committee was appointed to demise the Custom House. Clarke, writing in 1830, says "the Custom House must be one of the oldest houses in Ipswich * * it has been standing at least between four and five hundred years" (1330 to 1430). We question whether any architect with a knowledge of archæology would assign so remote a date as this. On the other hand, a writer in the *Suffolk Chronicle* at the time the New Custom House was opened (1846) remarked that the old building dated from 1689. This was equally wide of the mark. Documents at the Custom House afford convincing proof that the building was erected long prior to that date. It is true that the earliest of these documents bears date 1695, but in 1729 the officers in charge reported to the Commissioners of Customs that "the building was in so ruinous a condition that it was positively unsafe and dangerous to be in it, being very much out of the perpendicular, and held together only by pieces of iron."

A few years earlier it was declared incapable of defence against rogues and vagabonds, and during the reign of Queen Anne (1711) burglars could not resist the temptation it offered. Thieves effected an entrance and "broke open the locks of all the doors, drawers, and boxes, and particularly that chest for lodging the Queen's money in." This so-called chest was of wood and as it could not be made secure, the Officers asked the Honourable Commissioners to send them an iron chest to prevent any further loss of revenue from the like cause. A massive iron chest, well provided with locks, is now at the Custom House and it is believed was sent in answer to this application.

The Corporation being involved in debt, through frequent litigation, could not find money to repair the Custom House. The Handford Hall Estate had been mortgaged to raise funds, and ultimately an additional amount was obtained on the security of the Town Marshes. A dispute with Mr. Cooper Gravenor, the Lessee of the Custom House, who had paid no rent to the Corporation for 13 years, though he had on twelve occasions been elected Bailiff, increased their difficulties. A son of Mr. Cooper Gravenor was at this time Collector of Customs at the Port, and his description of the ricketty condition of the building, quoted above, caused the Commissioners of Customs in the spring of 1729 to permit the removal of the Customs business from the Old Custom House to more secure and convenient premises. The Corporation by this move, being again deprived of rent for their property, were roused to action, and they resolved to checkmate Mr. Gravenor. Mr. Francis Negus, one of the representatives of the Borough, was requested to wait upon the Commissioners of Customs and state the case for the Corporation. His influence may be inferred from the fact that a few days after his interview, the Commissioners wrote to the Customer and Collector at Ipswich stating that as "the *former* Custom House at your Port is said to be no longer safe, or fit for the purpose, since the business of the Port is so much increased, we direct you to consult with proper workmen what is necessary to be done, in order to put the same into a thorough repair and fit for the service."

The old building was speedily renovated and restored, and before the end of December, 1729, the Collector received orders to "remove to the Custom House lately repaired and rented of the Corporation, and there to transact the business of the Port."

The Custom House thus repaired at the expense of the Government is the building represented in our engraving. We may now inquire what is the probable date of its erection.

Every detail of the building exhibits evidence of Classic feeling and the influence of the Renaissance. The Classic mouldings and contour of the stone columns, their caps and bases, the heavy pendants, the relief carvings, the substitution of square for pointed or four-centred heads to openings, the outline and arrangement of the roofing all point to one conclusion, that it has no claim to the antiquity which Clarke tries to assign to it. That it was erected before the middle of Queen Elizabeth's reign is very improbable.

A few words relative to the Officials. Men of note have at various dates been anxious to hold appointments in the Customs department. The attraction was not the salary, which in old times was nominal, but the fees and leisure time, the duties occupying only a few hours daily. The poet Chaucer was Comptroller of Customs on wools in London; Rowe, the dramatic poet, was a Landing Surveyor; Congreve and Prior also held office in the Customs. We have no such great names to recount at Ipswich, but the chief officials have oftentimes been men of considerable standing. Among them were Thomas Alverd, who was appointed by Wolsey to be keeper of his wardrobe, and had in consequence to discharge his duties of Customer by deputy,* Richard Felaw, (the commercial agent of Sir John Howard, afterwards Duke of Norfolk,) who represented the Borough in Parliament, and was a large contributor at the foundation of our Grammar School, Richard Percyvale, who compiled our "Great Domesday Book," Samuel Wollaston, of Finborough Hall, a brother of the gentleman who in 1768, 1774, and 1780 was elected as M.P. for the Borough, was Patent Customer of the Port in 1781. Erasmus Darwin, a member of the now celebrated Darwin family, held the post of Searcher at Ipswich in the last century. The influence of these officials may be judged from the fact that the Collector or Customer was frequently one of the Chief Magistrates of the Borough. An ancient mode of collecting the "King's Revenues" was by farming them out to private individuals, and during the reign of Elizabeth, Sir Walter Raleigh "farmed" the Customs at Ipswich and his successor was Sir Francis Walsingham. At this period Mr. Henry Goldingham seems to have offered a bribe to the great Lord Burghley for an appointment here. He applied to the Lord Treasurer for the Comptrollership, telling his lordship that if the office was conferred on him he had a hundred pounds for his lordship "to dispose as seems best to your honor." At the Restoration, the Marquis of Hertford successfully solicited the appointment of "Customer" at Ipswich for a Mr. Booth.

In illustration of the nominal salaries it may be mentioned that, in the early part of the reign of James I. (1604), the Collector, Edmund Jenny, gentleman, had for annual "fee and reward," £46 13s. 4d.; the Comptroller, Augustine Parker, £12; and the Searcher, Thomas Cleer, an allowance of £8 for his better maintenance and encouragement in the due execution of his duties. A century later, 1711, the salaries were, Customer, Paul Boyer, £55 6s. 8d.; Comptroller, John Carter, £15; Searcher, James Pavey, £8.† These small payments by the Crown were, as might be expected, supplemented by fees imposed on merchants, in most cases arbitrary in amount and far beyond what the services performed justified. Some idea of the extent to which this extortionate system prevailed, may be gathered from the fact that on the abolition of fees to Customs Officers in 1831, there were in the Long Room, in London, Patent Officers styled Cocket Writers, whose average fees were estimated at £1,000 per annum each, although their acknowledged salaries were only £60, whilst a junior clerk with a nominal salary of £100, received when his office was abolished £800 per annum as compensation for his loss of fees, calculated at the rate of *one-third* of his actual receipts.‡

The formation of an extensive Wet Dock, under the Act already referred to, with increased

* Coll. Hen. 8. v. 4. No. 297.

† Audit Office declared Accounts, Bundles 594, Roll 2, and Bundle 782, Roll 961.

‡ Chester's Chronicles of the Customs.

facilities for shipping heralded the doom of the Old Custom House which by this date, 1841, was considered not merely inadequate to the requirements, but architecturally a disgrace to the Town. The happy idea was conceived of finding a home under one roof for the Officers of the Customs, the Inland Revenue, and the Dock. The idea once started gradually received support, and the present Hall of Commerce was the result. This building was opened July 21st, 1845, Mr. John Medland Clarke being the architect and Mr. Pettitt the builder. The contract for its erection was £4250.

THE PORT.

Ipswich was a Port in the early days of English history. In Saxon times towns in connection with ports, to which native produce was brought for sale and exportation, were surrounded by walls or ramparts, to protect the goods stored therein. As early as 919, when the Danes sailed up the Orwell, landed their forces and plundered the Town, Ipswich was one of these walled ports.

In Lancastrian Times there is documentary evidence of its having been known as the Port of Orewell. * The origin of this word and the claims to the existence of an antient town of that name have been examined elsewhere. † The town of Ipswich claims its port by prescription. Its limits would appear to have been well understood and enjoyed without dispute, until the town of Harwich was made a free town corporate in the 13th Edward II., when jealousies shortly began to arise between the rival burgesses. In the 14th Edward III. a Commission of Inquiry‡ was issued concerning the haven, which, after reciting that “our well-beloved Burgesses of the Towne of Ipsw^{ch} have prayed us that whereas they doe hold of us as of our Crowne of England the said Towne, with the appurtenances in fee farme by the gift and grant of our progenitors formerly Kings of England, rendering thereout to us 60^{li} yerely : and although the whole Haven of Erewell in the arme of the sea there to the said Towne of Ipsw^{ch} dothe belong and from all times passed *hathe belonged*,” &c., proceeds to set forth that “the men of the town of Herewick by collour of our l^{rs} patents,” &c., “the customs of all goods and merchandises comming to the said port of Erewell * * * doe take and will not leave off to take,” &c. The Commissioners were accordingly directed to inquire by oath of honest and lawful men of the County of Suffolk “If the Port aforesaid with y^e arme of the sea there doe belong to the said Towne of Ipsw^{ch} as it is said or not—and if soe then from what time, in what manner, and how,” and as to the distresses, attachments, toll, and other customs taken by the Bayliffs of the said Towne of Ipsw^{ch} &c. The Inquisition taken upon these Articles returned “that the port of Erewell wholly wth the wholle arme of the sea there running from a certain place called the Polles§ in the deepe sea on every side unto the towne of Ipsw^{ch} to the said Towne, as to the Crowne of our Soveraine Lo: the King dothe belong, and for all times past *hathe belonged*.” The Commissioners, after adducing some information which was beyond the limits of their inquiry, set forth the several tolls and customs which the Bayliffs of Ipswich had been in the habit of taking, and the instances of illegal exactions by the men of Harwich.

In the 3rd Richard II. the Town of Ipswich petitioned the King that they might have their haven to Polls Hened granted to them to hold in fee farm w^{ch} they have time out of memory belonging to them, but not expressed in their Charter in p^ticular words.¶ The result was the issue of a second commission to certain Commissioners therein mentioned “to inquire

* Rymer's *Fœdera*—Dale's *Harwich*, p. 14.

† Wodderspoon, p. 151.

‡ Bacon's *Annals*, p. 64.

§ The Sands outside Landguard Point.

¶ Bacon, p. 80.

if the Port to the place aforesaid hathe formerly and still dothe pertain to the Towne as parcell of the ffarme thereof. And if it be to the prejudice of y^e Crowne or others that it should be granted unto them unto the place aforesaid in aid of their fee ffarme." The Inquisition taken by virtue thereof at Shotley returned "that the porte of y^e Towne of Ipsw^{ch} extends from the said Towne unto the said place called Polles Henneds and soe hathe donne time out of minde, and remaineth soe at the present parcell of the fee and ffarme of the said Towne; and that it is not to the dammage or prejudice of the King or others, if the King shall grant the same to y^e Burgesses of the said Town, theire heires and successors."

Amongst the antient customs of the town, again brought into writing upon the compilation of the Little Domesday Book (19th Edward I.), was that of a Court of Petty Pleas, sitting from tide to tide, to hear Maritime Pleas.

In the 11th Henry VI. the water bounds were sailed, every craft of the town having to find boats.

By the Charter of Concession of 24th Henry VI., and by the Inspeximus and Confirmation of 3rd Edward IV., Admiralty Jurisdiction was conferred upon the bailiffs, burgesses, and commonalty, with the Borough liberties suburb and precincts by land or by water. Under this charter the bailiffs manfully refused to execute the Lord High Admiral's precept to attach a ship in "the Rode of Ipsw^{ch}" in 1493.

Henry VIII., by Letters Patent, in the 10th year of his reign, after reciting the grant by his grandfather of the Admiralty Jurisdiction, and that the limits of the port "are known to be and have been time out of mind within the liberties of the Town aforesaid" and that some "evil-minded persons" have molested and disturbed the enjoyment of these liberties, declares and notifies "that the Port aforesaid and the Water running by the flowing and ebbing of the sea, from the said port towards the South East, unto the said place called Polleshened alias Polleshed, and also the aforesaid Land and Soil sometimes overflowed and covered with water by the Ebbing and Flowing of the Sea, was, and is within the Liberty and Franchise of the Town aforesaid. And the said Port, Water, and Course of Water, and the aforesaid Land and Soil, by the Flowing and Ebbing of the Sea, sometimes overflowed and covered with Water. * * * We do, by these Presents, annex and unite them to the said Town as parcel of the said Town and within the liberties and franchise of the same." The King by the same charter confirmed the Admiralty Jurisdiction, and this title was subsequently recognised by the Lord High Admiral by warrant, dated 7th Feb., 11th Henry VIII.

Notwithstanding this confirmation of the privileges, the inhabitants of Harwich were presented in 1535 for taking anchorage at Landguard, and Bacon's Annals of Ipswich are full of presentments for minor offences against the Admiralty Jurisdiction of the town at various points in the river. The Corporation of Ipswich seems also to have taken the part of the inhabitants of Chelmondiston and other places within the haven, when vexed by the process of the High Admiral, and Admiralty Courts were frequently held at different points down the River.* The quarrels with the men of Harwich however still continued though they were brought to something like a culminating point in an action for anchorage dues, taken from a vessel in Harwich Harbour, which was heard at the Essex Assizes in 1778 and resulted in a verdict for the Corporation of Ipswich, a new trial being refused to the defendants. The question of franchise seems to have been definitely settled by this action, but it does not appear to have been necessary for the purposes of the case to determine the ownership of the soil.

The water boundaries of the port were again perambulated in the years 1722, 1759, 1761, and 1811. †

The title of the Corporation to the soil is evidenced by numerous grants of foreshore and ooze for the purposes of reclamation and making quays; they appear also to have jealously watched any interference with the foreshore or bed of the river, especially in the matter of

* Wodderspoon, pp. 142-147.

† Bransby's Perambulations.

setting out of quays and jetties, several instances occurring in the Corporate Records of complaints being made and penalties being imposed. They also appointed a Water Bailiff, Crane Porters, and Warden. The Bailiff's duty appears to have been, to execute their Admiralty precepts, levy the fines, and latterly to collect their tolls, dues, and cranage at the Common Quay and, last but not least, to look after certain beds of oysters and see that they were not dredged out of season. In the early days of Elizabeth, this office seems to have been sometimes let to the highest bidder, but later on in her reign they returned to a salary of £30. Master and supporters seem to have been appointed as early as 1474. The duty of the Warden seems to have been to fish for the bailiffs and to preserve such "eyry of swann" as Mr. Bayliffs should put in the river. This official's salary in the reign of Elizabeth was 4 marks.

Besides the cranage and wharfage at the Common Quay other dues were levied by the Corporation as incidents of their port. These were a due of 2d. per chaldron upon coals, an anchorage due of 1s. for every vessel not belonging to the Port anchoring in the river, a groundage due of 8d. upon every such vessel grounding in the river, the bailiffs' dues of 2 bushels of coals from every ship that imports coals, unless it was the property of a freeman, also of a quantity of salt from every similar ship importing salt; these two last latterly became commuted at 1s. each, and 2d. of fish from every boat. At the time of the Municipal Corporation's Commission Inquiry in 1835 the 2d. coal duty was stated to realise £300 per annum. No account could be given of the other dues. To the Commissioners appointed to enquire into local charges upon shipping in 1854, the coal duty was returned at £685 gross for 1852, the Bailiffs' (or as they then were Mayor's) dues at £30, whilst the others it was said the Water Bailiff was permitted to keep for his trouble.

The Corporation seems to have done little for the conservancy of the river. Persons casting ballast or filth into the channel were presented in Admiralty and fined. Certain slight attempts were made to regulate the fisheries, and in the reign of Elizabeth a little was done to beacon the channel. The same neglect which allowed the old Quay and the Custom House to fall into a dilapidated condition also characterized the conservation of the river, with the result that in the latter end of the last century the navigation of the upper reaches of the Orwell had become intricate and difficult, a vessel of 100 tons not being able to get up to the quays without fear of detention. This naturally produced a feeling of dissatisfaction on the part of the Merchants of the town, which the Corporation sought to allay by the employment of a barge to cleanse the river at an annual payment of £150 from the coal duty of 2d. per chaldron. This did little to appease the growing feeling of discontent, and in the early part of the present century meetings of the inhabitants were held with the view of placing the conservancy of the Port in other hands. A characteristic report of the period, full of dry humour, relates how the depth of water was only five feet at neap, and at the Spring tides eight feet at the Quays, and how the shipping of that day had to wait ten days for a tide to get to or from the wharfs, and that it sometimes occurred that there was not a tide during springs sufficient to remove the shipping without the expense of lighterage and portorage, during which the goods were exposed to suffer much peculation and waste. The result was the passing of the first River Act in 1805, placing the conservancy of the river in the hands of the Commissioners thereby constituted.

A further limitation of the conservancy rights of the Corporation took place upon the passing of the Stowmarket Navigation Act, in 1768, by which the trustees thereby constituted took charge of the tidal portion of the river from Handford Bridge to Stoke Bridge. And again by the Harwich Harbour Act, 1863, which placed the conservancy of the haven in the custody of the Conservators as far as an imaginary line drawn across the river from Shotley Point to Fagborough Head, and within those limits abolished the antient dues levied by the Corporation of Ipswich. These are now no longer levied, with the exception of the coal duty of 1½d. per ton, and the exemptions of freemen were abolished by the Shipping Dues Exemptions

Act, 1867. The Oyster Fishery Rights have been preserved to the Corporation by the Ipswich Fishery Act, of 1859, and the present Corporation still exercises its antient jurisdiction to the mouth of Harwich Harbour as a Sanitary Authority.

As regards the early limits of the *Customs Port* of Ipswich, the records at the Custom House do not afford much information, but they appear to have been reduced in extent in the 5th William and Mary, by commission dated the 19th May, 1693, to so much of the River Orwell as was above an imaginary line drawn across the river from Levington Creek to Till's or Toller's Hole, the residue of the estuary being within the Customs Port of Harwich. These limits, however, were again enlarged, by a Treasury Warrant of June, 1878, to the line at the mouth of the river from Shotley Point to Fagborough Head, to be co-extensive with the modern conservancy jurisdiction.

With respect to the commercial aspect of the Port, its importance is in some measure shown by the fine of 200 marks, which at the end of the 12th century Richard I. levied upon the inhabitants for unlawfully supplying the enemy with corn. Such a fine, at a time when land in the district was let at four pence per acre, and wheat sold at four shillings and sixpence per quarter, indicates the presence of corn merchants and a considerable trade.

Being one of the so-called King's Ports, Ipswich in the time of the Plantagenet Kings, shared with London, Boston, Southampton, Hull, Chester, Newcastle, Lynn, Plymouth, Sandwich, and Yarmouth the privilege of receiving the foreign trade of the country. Its proximity through Harwich Harbour to Brabant, Flanders, and Holland probably caused Ipswich to be thus distinguished. Antwerp was for a long period the staple town, and the Flemings were the chief foreign traders who reached our shores. As craft were small, the approach by a river was considered an advantage. Several of the King's Ports, like the oldest cities in Greece, were not immediately on the coast. When petty states sent out piratical invaders, places entirely open to the sea were looked upon as dangerous, and ports on a navigable river were preferred by traders. Ipswich became successively a royal burgh, a walled port, a customs port, and lastly a staple port.

There is no reasonable ground for doubting that from a very early date in English History a tax for the benefit of the King was levied in specie or in kind on all native produce exported, and on all kinds of foreign wares imported. Tonnage and poundage duties were levied as early as the reign of Richard the Lion Hearted, by an organization connected with the central control of the Exchequer, and as the system was then in a complete state of elaboration, it must have had its origin long prior to the date shown by the imperfect records. It probably came into existence at the consolidation of the Saxon Kingdom. Ipswich was one of the ports at which a special revenue official was placed. John in his Charter, speaks of him as the "Provost," and as Reeve or Provost he resided in the town to render half-yearly accounts to the Sheriff of the county.

That the Merchandise of the Port was considerable is evidenced in many ways, though returns are not obtainable for the earlier years. John, by his Charter, granted (1199) to the Burgesses of Ipswich "freedom from toll, and all other customs throughout our sea ports," that is, freedom from Port dues for goods or merchandise bought or sold, "which have been set or landed upon wharfs or common ground in all the King's Ports." Power was also given them "to have a Merchants' Guild and their own house." Henry III. in confirming the Charter (1251) specially mentioned the merchandise of the Port, and his successor, Edward I. (1282) made the merchants of Ipswich, being Burgesses, free of portage, anchorage, standage, and searchage, for all their merchandize in all the King's Ports. A few years later he appointed a permanent "Customer" "to collect, receive, and guard the revenue for the Crown."

We have mentioned that from an early date an import and export tax, for the benefit of the King, was levied on all goods at certain ports. These tolls were, many of them, petty in amount and somewhat difficult to collect. The sagacious Edward I. exchanged them for a definite assessment on the chief commodities of the realm distinctly specified. In this Eastern

district of England the principal products for export were wool, sheep skins, and leather. Thompson, in his *History of Boston*, gives a tabular statement shewing the amount of duties annually collected for the King at Ipswich and Yarmouth, for the seven years ending 1285. These returns show that the amount at Ipswich was £932 8s. 7d.; Yarmouth, £323 12s. 4½d.

In the last year of these returns the King, for some offence committed by the Burgesses, seized the Town and took away all power of local government. He appointed a "Custos" who exercised his own discretion in administering laws and customs. This continued for six years, paralysing the trade of the Port. But the merchants, nevertheless, fitted up two ships to aid the King in his Scottish war, and it was through this effort that the Borough regained its freedom. Edward, pleased by the bravery of the Ipswich seamen, sent them home with a letter of commendation and restored the liberties of the Borough (1291), but he took care to improve the occasion by raising the Fee Farm rent, from forty to sixty pounds per annum.

Judging from documents at the Record Office, commerce advanced by rapid strides after the Town regained its freedom. In the first year of Edward II. (1307), the Great Custom collected at Ipswich amounted to £312 7s. 6½d. As the Great Custom did not include "Imports," this sum may be said to show that the Export trade had more than doubled in the course of twenty years. The kind of goods exported is not detailed, but we know they must have chiefly consisted of—

1st. Wool, paying Custom 6s. 8d. per sack from natives; and 10s. per sack if exported by foreigners.

2nd. Wool-fells (sheep skins), 300 to the sack, at the same rates.

3rd. Leather, so many lasts, paying 13s. 4d. per last; or 20s. if exported by foreigners.

4th. Rough undyed cloth, duty 1s. 5d. per piece if exported by aliens.

Through documents at the Record Office, we also learn that amongst those who exported wool from Ipswich, in the reign of Edward II., were: Robert de Balsam, Nicholas de Middleton, William Cursoun, Rodger de Bythering, John Flynte, Richard de Scholethorp, William de Palgrave, Geoffrey Cauntrel, Walter Rabatts, Edmund de Acre, Roger de Stratton, Geoffrey de Acre, Stephen de Erlyng, William Malyn, Thomas de Ely, Nicholas le Barbour, William le Ry, and Henry le Retoun.

The Collectors of Customs at Ipswich (1322), when the above named were exporters of wool, were John de Wakefeld and Henry le Retoun. Their accounts were kept thus:

"The ship called The Margaret, of Witsand, whereof Robt. Trofte is master, weighed "the 21st day of May.

"Robert de Balsam, rated for 9 serplers, 7 sacks, 16 stone of wool, paid ... 50/9½

"Nicholas de Middleton, rated for 3 serplers, 2 sacks, 19 stone, paid ... 18/2½

"William Cursoun, rated for 4 serplers, 13 sacks, 17 stone, paid ... 24/4½

"Total of the wool laden in this ship, 16 serplers, 14 sacks.

"Custom thereof ÷ £4 13s. 4½d. (correct)

"And for the Cocket 6d.

"Increment ½d."

As the word staple became an important designation, applied in various ways, during the early stages of English commerce, it may be desirable to define its meaning. "Staple" meant a place where goods were stored or exposed for sale. The staple towns first chosen for convenience came in time to enjoy important privileges. Goods intended for exportation had, in the first instance, to be exposed for sale at a staple town. Commerce, by this regulation, was thus restricted to places where the Customs Officers could superintend it, and where foreign merchants found it easy to assemble and were encouraged to resort. It was compulsory to have all goods weighed, by the standard, in the presence of an official before they could be sold or exported, then they were sealed with the King's seal, called the "Cocket," and

forwarded to a staple port, where on landing they were again weighed in the presence of the customer of the said port. Thus goods from York, staple town, were shipped at Hull, staple port, goods from Norwich, staple town, were shipped at Yarmouth, staple port. It will thus be seen that to make a port a staple was at this date one of those coveted distinctions which towns on the coast naturally desired, although but few received it. On the Suffolk coast the now ruined city of Dunwich had lost its prestige as a King's Port, and could not compete with Ipswich, but Yarmouth watched it jealously as a rival, and seems to have had sufficient influence to prevent this distinction being conferred upon it, until the commencement of the fifteenth century. The 6th Henry IV. (1404) arrived before Ipswich became a staple port.

In the reign of Edward I., the great natural product of England was wool, and when this English Justinian determined to revise the customs on exports, the Nobles of England represented to him (1297) that in their opinion one half of the wealth of the kingdom consisted of wool. This, though probably an exaggerated statement for all England, was most likely correct if applied to the East Anglian district. The exportation of corn was prohibited except when the price was very low, and wool consequently was produced in preference, as it could be exported in its raw condition, or manufactured, and then exported. On this account it was more profitable to grow than corn. At a very early period wool was extensively converted into a kind of cloth in Suffolk. The Barons in 1261 passed a law prohibiting its exportation, at the same time ordaining that no woollen cloths should be worn except such as were manufactured at home. The wars of John and Henry III. turned the activity of the people from peaceful industry to the waste of war, and by thus draining the country of its artisans the best mode of manufacturing the chief staple of the district was in a great measure lost. Dyed cloths were in consequence difficult to obtain, and a large number of persons had to dress themselves in cloth of the natural colour of the wool. Edward I. greatly encouraged commerce, and during his reign wool was freely exported and cloth imported. The improvement in commercial transactions brought about by this wise king were almost lost during the reign of his feeble son. It was not until Edward III. invited Flemish weavers and dyers to settle amongst us that *fine* woollen cloths were manufactured here, laying the foundation of a trade which greatly benefited the district for more than two centuries. Large quantities were exported from Ipswich. The material was sold and valued per cloth, each "cloth" being about 24 yards long. In one year in the sixteenth century the exports of Suffolk cloth from this port numbered 630 pieces, the value being £3,323, whilst the export of cloths from Wiltshire at the same date were valued at £1,740.*

If we look to commerce in the fifteenth century, we find great changes in the imports of the kingdom, in which the Port of Ipswich shared. Sweet wines were freely imported, and the Revenue from these imports, under the title of "Butlerage," from Michaelmas, 1501, to Michaelmas, 1502, at the rate of 2s. per tun, amounted at Ipswich to £79 6s., whilst at Yarmouth the total was only £9 5s. 4d. In the 22nd Henry VIII., when the King wanted to raise money for his household, he gave an assignment for £100 on the Customs at Ipswich, £80 on those at Yarmouth, and £55 on those at Lynn. That this really indicates the proportions of trade at each of these Ports is evidenced by a similiar assignment in the 1st of Henry VIII.†

It was in the reign of Elizabeth that Ipswich seems to have attained the zenith of its fame. There is scarcely a branch of foreign commerce carried on at the present time, with the exception of that with China, that was not prosecuted with more or less entirety in the reign of Elizabeth. The flourishing condition of the trade towards the close of the sixteenth century is shown by the average annual value of the Customs Revenue for the 5 years ending 1601, particularly when compared with other Ports in this district, and even

* Hubert Hall's History of the Customs.

† Ibid.

with Southampton, long known as a great commercial centre, thus :—Ipswich, £1553 9s. 3d. ; Yarmouth, £970 16s. 1½d. ; Lynn, £269 3s. 9d. ; Southampton, £899 10s. 4d.*

The commerce suffered severely during the reign of Charles I., farmers, merchants, and shipowners making their grievances known by petitions. In the time of the Commonwealth, the influence of the Puritans in Ipswich was great, and vessels belonging to the Port were freely employed by the Parliament in the conveyance of food and stores of various kinds. On one occasion, provisions for 16,000 men were sent from this town, and on another occasion, Ipswich ships were used for transporting soldiers to Ireland. Again, we find 869 loads of hay, and 2500 cwt. of biscuits were sent for the army in Scotland, and three weeks later (January, 1651), 315 tons of Suffolk cheese followed. During the same year, whilst Robert Dunkon was Bailiff, Samuel Dunkon of this town received an order from the Council of State for the sum of £1,500, in discharge of an amount due to him, for biscuits provided for the army.

Cavendish and Eldred connect the town with the Buccaneers of their age, and it is said that Mr. John Brandling, one of the Justices of the Borough and who was Bailiff in 1650, was the son of a renowned merchant adventurer. Evidence at the Record Office shows that some of these daring spirits resided in Ipswich in the age of the Commonwealth. In 1651, the Admiralty Judges granted a warrant to William Ling, master of "The Roebuck" of Ipswich, to roam the seas as private Man-of-War. Owners belonging to the Port, whose craft had been used for freight of various kinds, received Treasury warrants for considerable sums during this era, thus :—"The Fortune" £16 16s. 0d., "The Margaret" £90 15s. 0d., "The Dolphin" £155 9s. 8d., and again, £125 13s. 4d., "The Adventurer" £118 15s. 10d., "The Consent" £300 0s. 0d., "The Merchant" £375 0s. 0d. Yet with all this activity, among a section of the community, a serious derangement of trade is made evident by the Customs Revenue. We have seen that in 1601 it amounted to £1553 9s. 3d., whilst half a century later, 1649-50, it was only £1080.†

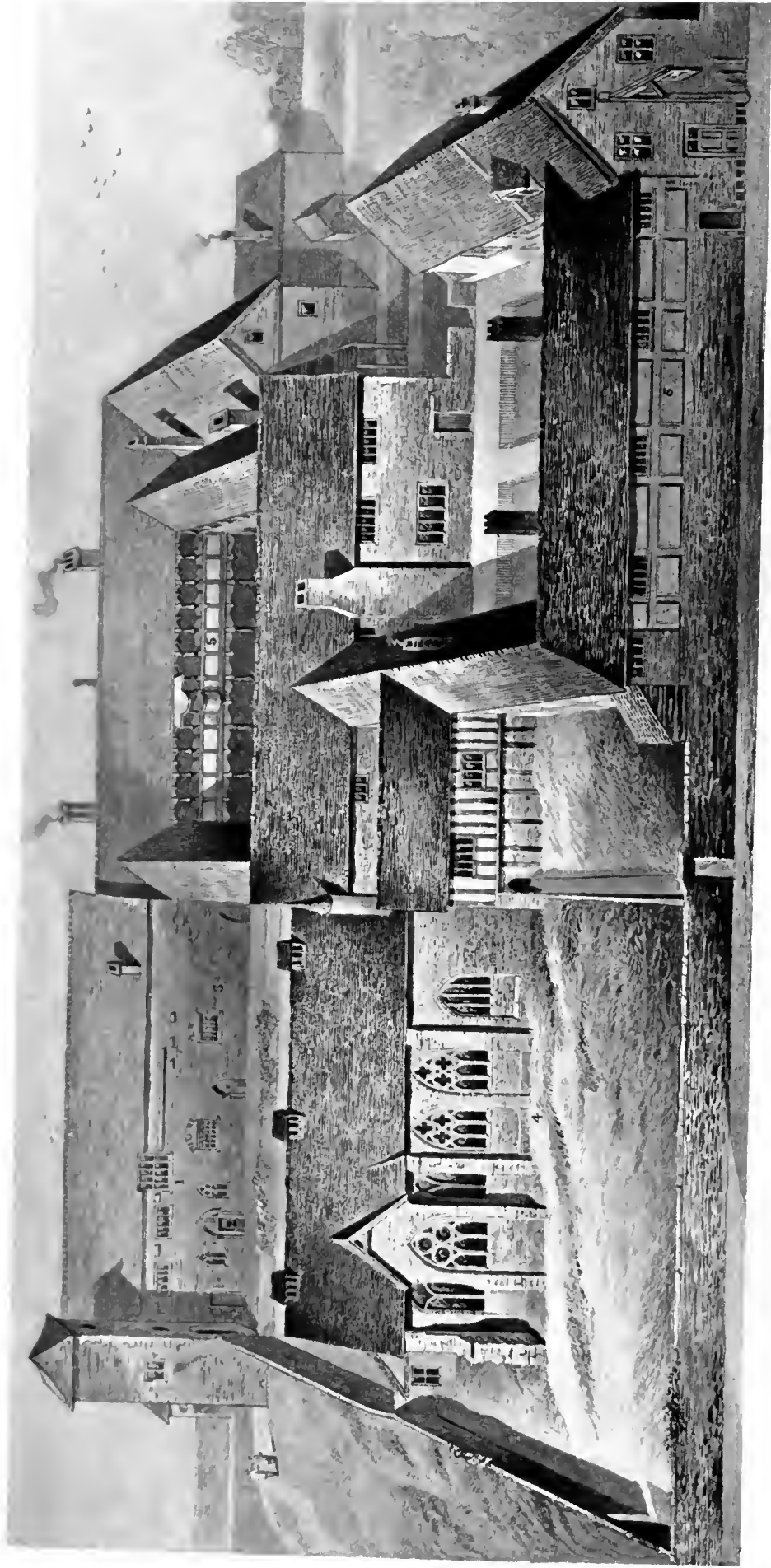
We have lingered long over the early history of the Port. Many other interesting details of the wool trade and the fitting out of ships for the Royal Navy are recorded by Wodderspoon,‡ to whose Memorials our readers must be referred. Our space has only enabled us to touch lightly upon the changes in jurisdiction, whilst the efforts which have been made to adapt our antient Harbour to the exigencies of modern requirements are matters which belong rather to the History of the 19th century and must be left to another pen.

* Hubert Hall's History of the Customs.

† Ibid

‡ pp. 185, 190, 220.





Ruins of Black Friars Monastery. 1746.

THE BLACK FRIARS

AND THEIR MONASTERY.



IRBY, in his "Suffolk Traveller," says that Henry Loudham, Henry Redred, and Henry Mansby, were the founders of the Black Friars' Monastery at Ipswich. Wodderspoon* leaves the matter in doubt, but he says Speed and Weaver assert that the first-named gave them such possessions as induced the Friars permanently to settle in this town. The researches of a living member of their own order, the Rev. C. F. R. Palmer,† conclusively prove, however, that the Black Friars were in Ipswich nearly a century before the grant of messuages by Henry Loudham and others was made, and that to Henry III. they were indebted for their settlement here. They came in 1263, and the King purchased of Hugh, son of Gerard de Langeston, a house and garden, which, for the weal of his own soul and the souls of his ancestors, he gave to the Friars, that they might dwell there, and on September 15th he commanded John de Vallibus, Keeper of the Peace in Suffolk, to go in person and give them full possession of the messuage. This house was situated in Foundation Street, near where the Porter's Lodge to Tooley's Almshouses now stands. In this humble tenement the Friar Preachers first took up their abode. Two years after the first gift, the King, through his Confessor, Father John de Derlington, granted another messuage, also belonging to the same owner as the former one.

This addition to their property must have been extensive, as the Friars shortly afterwards began to build their church, which they dedicated to St. Mary. In a Monastery the church was the heart of the place, and its erection and adornment occupied the first thought. How the money for the erection of such a substantial edifice came to them is unknown. Taylor, in his "Index Monasticus," says that Lynn, Norwich, and Yarmouth were divided into districts, one being assigned to each of the Mendicant Orders, the Friars thus obtaining considerable revenue from the privileges of confessing, preaching, and begging in their respective districts. But no facts are known to warrant the statement, and it is more likely that generous benefactors, touched by the Friars' fervent appeals, poured out their wealth to build the church. Fortunately at this period the Provincial of their order, Father Robert de Kilwarby, a man of position and influence, who became Archbishop of Canterbury and died a Cardinal, interested himself personally in this new foundation, and in 1269 obtained for them another messuage adjoining it. Other lands were gradually acquired. In 1307, Alice Harneys assigned a plot, 200 feet long and 36 feet broad, for enlarging the site; and in January, 1333-4, Godfrey Lumbekyn, parson of Rendlesham, and Richard de Leyham, assigned by royal license an acre of land. In 1346, another enlargement occurred. A plot of land, 100 feet in length and the same in breadth, was obtained from John Harneys. This land was held of the Crown *in capite*, and as the transfer was made without a royal licence, the Friars obtained a pardon for transgressing the Mortmain Statutes. The "burgesses and men of the town" were, however, to have free access to the town walls.

Before three more years had closed the popularity of the Friars was made evident by the Bailiffs and whole community of the town granting to them "in free, pure, and perpetual charity, and for the safety of the souls of ourselves, our ancestors, and successors," a plot of land, five score and three feet of men in length, one head of which abutted on the Friars' garden and enclosure towards the West, the other upon the middle of the ditch of the town wall on

* Memorials of Ipswich.

† Published in "The Reliquary," April, 1887. By the kind permission of the Author, we have in the text availed ourselves of this exhaustive article.

the east. The Friars agreed that they and their successors should pay a rent of sixpence a year, and keep up the wall opposite their plot and the two great gates, one in the north head and the other in the south part of their court, in order that through these gates the burgesses and their successors might ride and drive, as often as the said "town, from any misfortune or necessity (which God forbid), shall require to be defended hereafter."† Bacon, in his "Annals," does not mention this grant of land, though the deed is among the Municipal Records. A duplicate of it may be seen at the British Museum, doubtless taken from the archives of the Friars at the dissolution of the Monastery.

Long before this date both the Grey Friars and the Carmelites had settled in Ipswich. Like the Black Friars they ultimately had buildings of considerable extent, and for many years a healthy rivalry existed between them. Their enthusiasm re-acted upon others, and men of gentle blood were anxious to join the new order as lay associates. Men of learning also, wearied and worn by the turmoil of the age, were desiring of resting in the sanctuary of the cloister. The rules of the Order had been modified to meet such cases, but the Black Friars lacked the necessary accommodation. At this juncture, 1350-1, nearly a hundred years after the entrance of the preachers into Ipswich, three messuages were given to them for the extension of their Monastery, thus enabling the Friars to open the doors to outsiders who were craving admission. The benefactors in this case were the three Henrys—Henry Loudham, Henry Rodbert, and Henry de Monessele—whom Kirby had credited with the foundation of the establishment.

In this way the Black Friars acquired an extensive site, all of which was through them made extra-parochial. It was bounded on the east by the Wash, or Gunpowder Lane (Lower Orwell Street), on the west by St. Edmund-a-Pountney Lane (Foundation Street), on the north by Stepples Street (Orwell Place), and on the south by a house and garden adjoining Star Lane. The Monastic Buildings here erected are said to have housed more than fifty religious. By the aid of Joshua Kirby's drawing of the remains of this Monastery, made in 1746, which we have had re-produced to illustrate this article, our readers will obtain a fair idea of the principal buildings as they appeared in the days of their prosperity.

The Monastery was entered at the tower, shown at the extreme left of the engraving, a part of which formed the gate house, from whence a long covered passage led past the refectory and the kitchen to the cloisters. These were near the centre of the site, and, surrounded by other buildings, formed a quadrangle of two stories, marked 5 on the engraving, on the south side of the church. Round this quadrangle on both stories ran a covered arcade, seven or eight feet in width, providing a walk along and beneath the galleries. The upper floor had a panelled wooden gallery front nearly breast high, above this it was open, the upright timbers being continued to support the over-hanging roof. At the time when Kirby's sketch was made, the appearance of the cloisters area resembled the galleries which were so marked a feature in the quadrangles of some of the old London taverns, but the four-sided balusters, with moulded ornamental lines, must have been put up long after the convent was dissolved. The front of the cloister was about 80 feet in length, and the open space between the walks, some 60 feet by 40 feet in extent, was covered with grass. This open space, called the Garth, was exclusively used as the burial place of the brethren. Here, bareheaded, the Friars at stated times assembled to pray for the souls of the departed. The cloister was the place for study, where "Mused of old the cloister'd brothers." The rooms were indeed the workshops of the convent. There were no fireplaces in them, but pans of lighted charcoal were used for warmth, as they are now at Rome. Even in the coldest weather a good penman might be seen copying a scarce MS., and in an adjoining room a lay brother illuminating the initial letters of a favourite volume. Some of the brethren were famous for their knowledge of medicine, and in the cloister much of this knowledge was acquired. The studies of Father John Sygar being approved by the Master-General, he was, in the fourteenth century, assigned by him to the convent at Ipswich as

† Corporation MSS.

Lector, until the General Chapter of the Order held its next assembly. His duties were to teach and give lectures on theology and Scripture, philosophy, and various branches of science, and especially to teach grammar to the young. This indicates what went on in the cloister.

The north and west sides of the cloister on the second floor were used as dormitories. Each consisted of a long room, with bare walls, having a broad passage from end to end strewn with rushes. Like a hospital ward at the present day, it was divided into compartments. The beds, made of straw, were placed on low bedsteads and the bedding was all woollen. In case of sickness, old age, or continued infirmity feather beds and linen sheets were allowed. At the side of each bed stood an armless chair, and frequently a wooden crucifix or a portrait of the Virgin Mary was placed at the head of it. Sometimes a separate chamber was assigned to the aged or infirm, but in all such cases the sanction of the highest authority at Rome had to be obtained. Thus in 1397 the Master-General of the Order approved the grant of a separate chamber to Father Reginald Fynbork by the brethren of his native convent at Ipswich. Among legacies in the Suffolk Wills to particular Friars of this Monastery was to one "a tick for a feather bed," and to another "a feather bed, blankets, bolsters, and sheets." A lamp was kept burning in the dormitory throughout the night, as the service at two a.m. had to be attended by all the brethren.

The refectory, with kitchen and cellarage, was a large building to the north of the cloisters, standing like the church, north and south, but distant from it some fifty yards. It is marked 1, 2, and 3 on the engraving. The room was nearly 100 feet in length, 24 in width, and of proportionate height. The walls were bare, and the roof principals consisted of plain unmoulded ribs, slightly resting on moulded hammer beams, with curved wall braces, but without the usual corbels or supports in the wall below. This roof is well known through drawings by Fredk. B. Russel and Jabez Hare, both of which have been engraved. The room was lighted by a large window at the south and three others on the east. Externally the walls were of rubble, plastered over; the doorways exhibited Fourteenth Century work, and in the lower part on the eastern side several Early English arches were found when the building was pulled down about 1849. Some of the windows, as seen in the engraving, were probably Eighteenth Century creations. After 1763 the refectory was known as the Grammar Schoolroom.

It was in this room that the brethren assembled for their meals. The reader will possibly be interested by a rapid recital of the customs which prevailed and the discipline enforced. At any rate it will give completeness to this record. A peep into the refectory, soon after mid-day, would have shown a number of Friars dressed in white* common serge tunics, with scapulars and hoods, having also leather girdles from which a rosary was suspended. They were standing in two lines in front of bare deal tables, whilst at a cross table at the upper end of the room stood older members, and among them one whose appearance proclaimed him Prior. Priests and Clerics were distinguished by the "tonsure," and white scapulars; Lay Brothers had their hair simply cut round level with the ears, and wore black scapulars. The Prior rang a bell and grace was said. All then took their places, the Lay Brothers at the lower end of the side tables, and the Friars sitting according to rank. One of the Clerics moved to the lectern on the right of the Prior and sang some verses of scripture, and when the Prior touched the bell a second time the dinner began. A Lay Brother moved about noiselessly with jugs and dishes. As servants were not allowed in the Monastery the duty of waiting devolved upon each of the Lay Brothers in turn. The fare was of the simplest, the bread was coarse, but the fish was abundant, and ale good. Abstinence from flesh meat all the year round was a rule of the Order, and so strong in the fourteenth century was the ascetic feeling among the Friars, that fasting time extended from Holy Cross Day (September

* Some of our readers may think it erroneous for us to picture these Friars dressed in white serge flannel, but the black cloak, which led to their distinction among the people, was not worn in the Monastery, or in the choir, except from All Souls Day to Easter, when it was used as a protection against winter. It was, however, always worn when the Friars appeared in public and preached.

15th) to Easter, during which period they had only one meal a day (dinner), a little bread and wine being taken just before the closing prayers in the evening.

Conversation was not allowed during meals, but the Cleric who sat apart read in Latin a portion of the rules of the Order and passages of Scripture. The meal ended the Prior gave a rap on the table, and the reader rose and sang some verses of scripture, and concluded with "*Tu autem Domine, miserere nobis*" (But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us), to which all responded "*Deo gratias*," standing while they joined in the thanksgiving. The Precentor then intoned the Psalm "*Miserere mei Deus*," and all taking it up in alternate choirs proceeded, two by two, Lay Brothers leading and the Prior bringing up the rear, down the refectory, through the north cloister to the church.

The exterior of the church is well shown in the engraving. The interior measurement was in length 67 feet, and in breadth 24 feet. It seems to have stood north and south, or nearly so, instead of east and west. This was not uncommon with the Friars, who were eminently religious utilitarians. Orientation was to them a trifle, and in the ground plan of their buildings time-honored precedents were not allowed to hamper them in their arrangements. We can always discern at a glance whether this or that ruin was a Benedictine or a Cistercian house, even though there be not one stone left upon another, so only that we can trace the bare foundations, half buried beneath the soil. But when we are standing before the remains of a Franciscan or Dominican house we can never be sure how the buildings stood. The Friars had a free hand, and erected as necessity impelled them, or as funds permitted.

To return to the church, it consisted of a nave roofed-in in one span, with a slightly projecting transept at the north or chancel end. The window in the transept was of three lights, and had cusped circles in the traceried heads. It is probable that the gable had originally a stone coping, with a cross at its apex. Two of the windows on the west side were of similar character, but instead of circular had quatrefoil openings in the head. Some of the other windows had been altered, but that on the left of the gable was Early Geometric in style. On the eastern side of the church there were three more windows. For many years after its erection the internal walls were plain, without image or picture, a single candle beam between the choir and the nave being probably the only ornament. Images, pictures, and stained glass, the gift of benefactors, came in due course. A high screen separated the Friars and Lay Brothers from the congregation, for whose benefit, at the elevation of the Host, windows were opened in the screen, a Gregorian chant being at the same time sung.

The roof was plain and roughly worked. It consisted of single hammer beam principals with bold collar ties and collars, and a heavy king post at the apex of each set of timbers. The spandrels were deeply moulded and carved on the surface with bold oak foliage, plain shields, and a pair of shears. Whilst building their church, the Black Friars were the recipients of abundant alms; a devout cloth worker or draper being probably a generous benefactor, the shears were carved on the spandrels to attest his munificence. A merchant's mark of the same character appears on the east wall of St. Lawrence Church, Ipswich. Like the roof in the refectory, the carved spandrels were not supported on corbels but sprang directly from the face of the wall. When this church was pulled down in 1767, after having been used as a Grammar School, the roof was removed to a malt-house near Star Lane, and there cut and adapted to its new situation. It ultimately found a more appropriate resting place in a Wiltshire parish church.

The Monks were antagonistic to the Friars, and the Parish Clergymen soon learned to hate them through loss of fees. The burial ground of the Black Friars was on the east and west sides of the church. It was comparatively small, but wealthy persons frequently bequeathed legacies to the Friars, in order that they might gain the privilege of having their bodies interred in it. On this point superstition was remarkable. Some people felt sure of obtaining mercy at the day of judgment if they were buried in a Friar's habit. Cranmer mentions that persons used to wear a Friar's tunic as a protection against ague or pestilence,

and to ease their pains in the dying struggle. Edmund de Ufford, brother of the Earl of Suffolk, by his will dated 1374, directed that his body should be buried in a Friar's habit. Rank and opulence not being free from this credulity, the Friars' burial fees were wormwood and gall to the Parish Clergy. The Canons, they said, had robbed them of their endowments, and now the Friars were sweeping away their fees.

In the southern part of the cloisters the Prior's rooms were placed, and at the rear of them, having a full south aspect, was the chapter house. In the present century the large room was used for Christ's Hospital School. The house was of Fourteenth Century character, and in the front were enormous buttresses, apparently built to stay the wall, which had become weak through shallow foundations. In the chapter house, all the business of the community was transacted. It has been described not inaptly as the council chamber of the convent, being the place in which all local and personal matters were daily discussed, and once perhaps in every twenty years the principal Friars in England assembled to conduct general business. The government of this body was centred in a Master-General, who resided at the Papal Court, while the provinces were each ruled by Provincial Priors, and the charge of each house was committed to a Prior. The Provincial Priors were elected at a provincial chapter, the Conventual Prior in an assembly of his own community.

The Provincial Chapter of the Order was held at Ipswich about 1389, and probably in other years. As the Chapter embraced England and Wales, the gathering must have been a large one. At these meetings all the business of the province was transacted. They lasted five or six days, sometimes longer. The Kings of England, from Henry III. to Henry VIII., contributed food for three days. At first the sum allowed was £10, then Edward II. raised it to £15, being 100 shillings for himself for the first day, 100 shillings for the Queen the second day, and 100 shillings for the Royal Children on the third day. In return for this benevolence it was customary for the King to direct a royal writ to each Chapter, asking the assembled Fathers to pray for the Royal Family and the good state of the realm; and also to intercede in any particular political emergency.

In addition to payments made to the Friars when the Provincial Chapter held its Assembly in Ipswich, we have a few scanty notices of alms bestowed on, and legacies bequeathed to, them. Edward I. was in Ipswich, 1277, and during his stay he gave the Friars an alms of 14s. 10d. for two days' food. Shortly after, the allowance for each man was raised to a groat a day. Edward visited the town again in 1296, for the purpose of presenting his daughter in marriage to the Count of Holland. Through Father John de Hotham he gave the Black Friars four marks on December 23rd for the food for four days. The marriage took place in the King's Chapel, at the Priory of St. Peter and St. Paul, on the 8th of the following January, and on that day he most liberally bestowed on these Friars 13s. 4d. for a day's food. The executors of Queen Eleanor of Castile (1291) gave 100 shillings to the convent, through Father John de Hotham, Provincial. Among testators to the convent were Thomas de Wingfield, of Letheringham; Bartholomew Bacon, knt., of Erwarton; John Rookwode, of Stanningfield; Roger Drury, knt., of Rougham; Peter Garneys, of Beccles; Joan Lady de Bardolf, Sir John de Plais, John Baldwin (1488), draper, and William Cutler (1509-10), of Ipswich. The bequests are interesting, as they show how down to the last the Friars retained the confidence of all classes; they were recognized as *the* workers among the monastic orders centuries after the older Monks were regarded as landlords and little more.

After the Friars became free from the grinding influence of poverty, and Lay Brothers of rank dwelt among them, a guest-house was provided, which was open alike to baron, burgess, and swineherd, to the pilgrim from a distant land, and to the merchant who brought goods to sell at Holyrood Fair. Before the printing press came into existence the number of books in the world was small; but so learned a body as the Dominicans were sure to have manuscripts and treatises, some of priceless value; these were deposited in the library, and therein some two or three specimens of the genus book-worm were occasionally found.

It would be idle to assert that the Friars of the sixteenth century retained the vigour and energy of the fourteenth. The exemption from diocesan jurisdiction probably tended to destroy discipline, and when the Dissolution came, the Friars had lost that zeal and fervour which distinguished their early labours. Jocelin of Brakelond has shown us that the Abbot and his Monks in the great Abbey of Bury St. Edmund's did not always agree. So also with the Black Friars at Ipswich. Even in the second century of their existence, a commotion prevailed which seriously disturbed their harmony. In 1397 two Fathers were elected as Prior. This divided allegiance caused an appeal to be made to Rome, the Master-General declared that Father John de Stanton was the true Prior and that Father Williams was not, and that obedience must be given to the former. During the next year the Master-General transferred Father Richard de Lawsefeld from Ipswich to Canterbury, and made him a *son* of the Priory, which was thus bound to support him in sickness, old age, or infirmity.

The policy of Wolsey and his royal master led the Black Friars of Ipswich to anticipate the approaching storm. In the early part of the sixteenth century, their numbers were greatly reduced, and such parts of the monastery and gardens as were not absolutely necessary for their own use, were leased to other persons. In the 27th Henry VIII. (1535), the Prior and Convent by deed "given at Yppiswiche in our Chapetire House," leased a garden for forty years at a yearly rental of twopence to Henry Tooley, merchant, and Alice, his wife. This probably was the garden, half an acre in extent, held afterwards by Thomas Tooley. The Prior and Convent moreover leased a dwelling house with garden to Sir John Willoughby, *knt.*; another called Lady Daundy's lodgings to Wm. Golding; and another called Friar Woodcock's lodging to William Lawrence, August 22nd, 1537, for 30 years from the next Michaelmas.

Among the MSS. of the Ipswich Corporation is a lease (29th Henry VIII) for 99 years by Edmond the Prior, and the convent of House of Friars Preachers in Yppiswiche, to William Golding of the same place, gentleman, and to his assigns, of the houses and lodging which Sir John Tymperley, *knt.*, occupied and lately dwelt in; other portions of the property were also leased, and the whole brought in a rental of 36s. 10d.

The Grey Friars of Ipswich surrendered their property to the King more than seven months before the other mendicant orders of this town. The King's visitor, the Suffragan Bishop of Dover, made an inventory of their goods, April 7th, 1538, which is given by Wodderspoon in his "Memorials." These goods were laid, by order of the visitor, within the precincts of the Black Friars, securely locked and under the Prior's charge. In November following the same visitor returned, and received for the King's use the houses of the Black and Grey Friars, as he mentioned in a letter to Thomas Cromwell, the King's Vicar-General. On the expulsion of the community, William Sabyn, *gent.*, one of the King's sergeant-at-arms, whose residence adjoined the Monastery, became tenant of the site and buildings. The Black Friars' property then furnished the following rental to the Crown:—

Site, with all lands, orchards, gardens, &c., late in the occupation of the Prior	s.	d.
and convent, let to Will Sabyn - - - - -	13	4
Mansion leased to Sir John Willoughby - - - - -	13	4
Mansion, called Lady Daundy's lodging, leased to Will Golding - - - - -	0	2
Houses and gardens leased to Will Golding - - - - -	2	0
The Frayter, &c., leased to Golding and Will Lawrence - - - - -	0	8
Mansion, called Friar Woodkoke's lodging, leased to Lawrence - - - - -	0	6
Mansion and garden leased to Lawrence - - - - -	20	0
Garden leased to Tho. Tooley - - - - -	0	2
Total yearly rents - - - - -	50	2

William Sabyn in 1539 was elected one of the representatives of the Borough in Parliament, and the whole of the property was sold to him November 27th, 1541, for £24, from the

previous Michaelmas, to be held by the 20th part of a knight's fee and the yearly rent or tenth of 5s. Not long afterwards the entire site passed into the possession of John Southwell, the King's chirurgion, and in 1569 it was sold to the Corporation, who paid for it partly with their own money and partly with money belonging to Tooley's Charity. The conveyance was made absolutely to the Corporation, and the buildings were used for various public purposes, such as the Grammar School, Town Library, Bridewell, and Christ's Hospital School. The building called the Shire Hall was erected in 1698 on ground formerly used as a garden by the Friars.

The common seal of the Priory is oval. It bears the figure of the Virgin seated, with the "Infant Christ" in her arms. Below, under a pointed arch, is the figure of a Friar praying. Inscribed around is the motto : " + S . Co-vent . Fr-m . Predicatorvm . Gippeswici." The style is Late Thirteenth Century. The seal, the matrix of which is preserved in the Bodleian Library, is finely engraved in Wodderspoon's "Memorials of Ipswich."

The question naturally suggests itself what was the ecclesiastical condition of Ipswich when the Friars came? The town was small, it was provided with fourteen churches, but in it were no Monks. Though Monks properly so called were not located here, two Priories of Black Canons existed. These Canons lived according to the rule of St. Austin, which was not a strict one. The Canons of that rule were far more in sympathy with the parochial clergy than Monks could be. There was this essential difference between Monks and Canons :—The former held aloof from the cares, and interests and duties of the outer world, whilst the latter recognized duties which they were supposed to be in some way or other called upon to perform. As long as the original enthusiasm lasted they did discharge them. When the fire died out the Canons gradually, and in some cases rapidly, fell into the exclusive ways of the Monks. The richer a Canons' house grew, the more likely were the inmates to remember their privileges and forget their duties.

The Ipswich Canons were on good terms with the burgesses, and when the charter was granted by King John, the Priors were enrolled among the burgesses. They also won the esteem of the landowners of the neighbourhood, and thus managed to get almost the whole of the patronage of the Ipswich churches into their hands, as well as a considerable amount of property outside the town. The Priory of St. Peter and St. Paul was placed at the back of the present church of St. Peter, and the grounds were six acres in extent. It had the right of presentation to six churches in Ipswich, had property in 54 parishes, and its annual income in 1291 amounted to £46 0s. 11d. The other Priory, that of Holy Trinity, standing on the site of the present mansion of Christ Church, had finely timbered grounds, more extensive than the present park, with fish pond to produce delicacies for the table, pasturage for 400 sheep, free warren in eleven parishes, a mill, 140 acres of marsh, and an annual income of £47 17s. 4½d., chiefly derived from the tithes of appropriated benefices and houses in the town. It had the right of presentation to eight of the parish churches in Ipswich. The nominations of the religious teachers to the various parishes was thus entirely in the hands of the Canons to these Priories.

The Ipswich benefices, St. Mary Stoke excepted, rank at the present day among the poor ecclesiastical livings. In the thirteenth century they were in a similar condition, St. Clement was then valued at £6 13s. 4d.; St. Lawrence, £3 6s. 8d.; St. Margaret, £4 13s. 4d.; St. Mary Elms, £1; St. Mary Tower, £3 6s. 8d.; St. Nicholas, £1 10s.; St. Peter, £4; St. Mary Stoke, £29 9s. 6d. But through the right of presentation these sums, which included the rectorial tithes and the glebe, were absorbed by the Priories, and the Vicars of the parish churches were left to the tender mercies of their parishioners, on whose offerings, more or less voluntary, they had to depend for their subsistence. In consequence of this pillage the secular clergy in towns were very needy, and those only of low status would accept such benefices. Clerics abounded, as the law of the church shielded them to a great extent from the law of the king. We have the authority of Dr. Jessopp for stating that at this period, candidates for holy orders were admitted without much scrutiny or examination, and

the clergy consisted largely of men who traded on the profession as a means of secular advancement. There was everything to show that in the middle of the thirteenth century religious life was at a very low ebb, and the Canons and the clergy generally were in the habit of hearing confessions, celebrating mass, and dispensing the sacraments in accordance with a dull and formal routine. The clergy were required by law to preach in their parishes at least four times in a year, but even this small claim on the shepherd of the flock was frequently disregarded.* They were also forbidden to marry, nevertheless they *did* marry and their wives were called concubines.

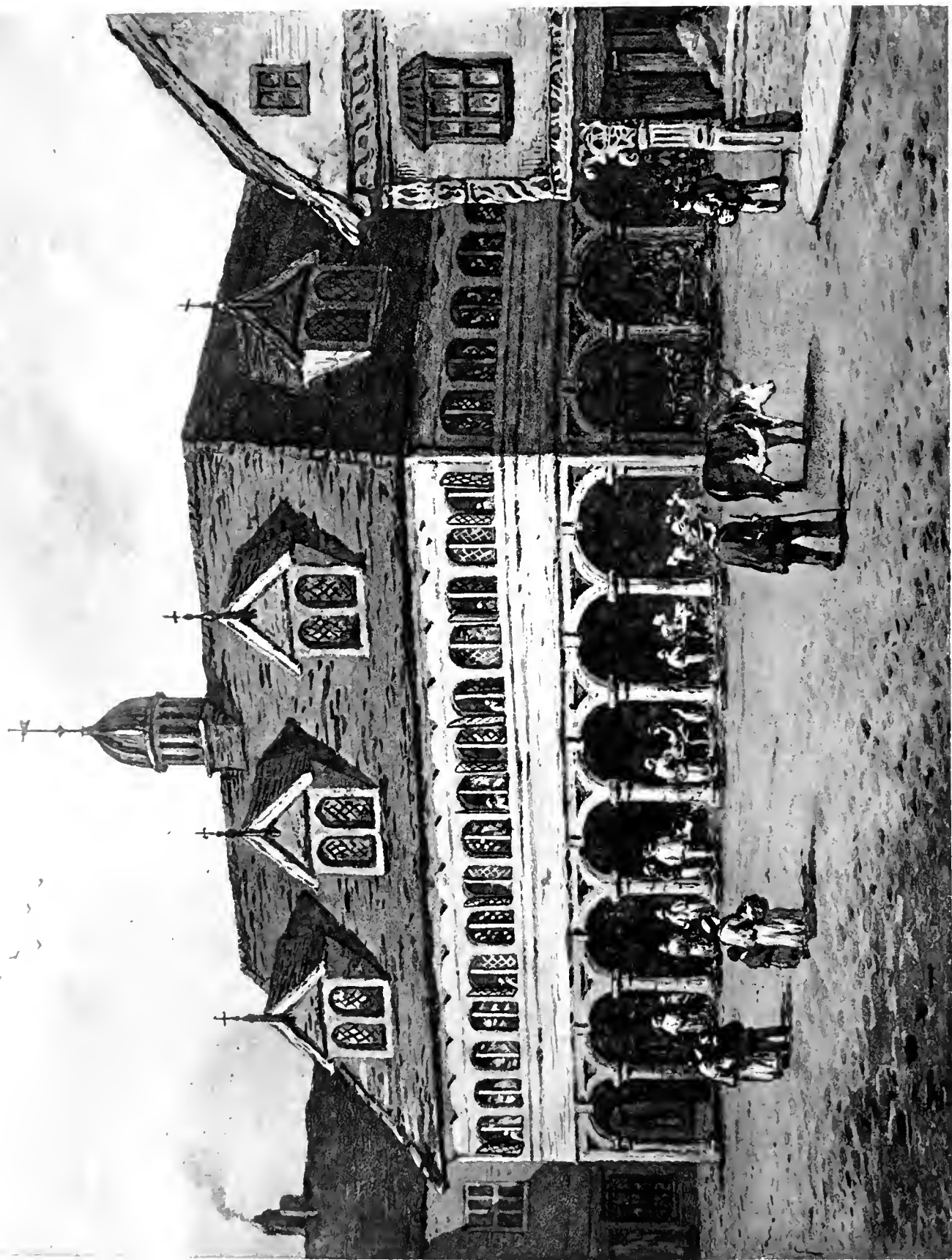
Such was the state of things ecclesiastically when the Friars came to Ipswich and threw themselves unreservedly upon the voluntary principle, depending for their daily bread upon alms from day to day. They came when years of war had cut off the young and the strong, and there was scarcely a home in which the weeping form of some childless, husbandless, hopeless woman could not be found. Having no endowments, they were compelled to restless action; compelled to appeal to the multitude in a hundred ways; compelled to try and make themselves useful, and, if possible, indispensable to all classes. The extensive buildings which they raised show that they found a way to the hearts and the pockets of the merchants and traders in Ipswich and the gentry around. Nor need this surprise us. Their enthusiasm brought into greater prominence the cold formality which prevailed. It startled the indifferent. Men were brought to think, then to act. Their hearts became warmed towards those who had set up for themselves a lofty standard of duty. The human, as well as the spiritual, side was touched. Exempted from episcopal jurisdiction, and invested with an authority by Pope Alexander V. to receive confessions, celebrate mass, and give absolution in any part of the world,† the Friars went wherever they were wanted, not caring in what parish they ministered. In lanes and in hovels, in the midst of loathsome diseases, by the sick bed in the Lazarhouse, where the poor leper was brought to end his days, in the haunts of the black death, from whence all others were flying, they were to be seen, fearless in the midst of infection, giving to the dying brother or sister, with the kiss of peace, an assurance of the Heavenly Kingdom.

The spirit of self-sacrifice naturally won for them a popularity only equalled by the reverence they gained as preachers. Sermons were unusual things in those days; pulpits were very rarely to be found in the parish churches. What little preaching was heard was commonly delivered from the steps of the altar, and in the early part of the fourteenth century not unfrequently sermons were preached from the roodloft. When the preaching Friar therefore took his stand at Lewis' Cross (in Brook Street), and exhorted his hearers in the highest style of pulpit oratory, the people listened with wonder and amazement, and looked upon their Preaching brother as a prophet sent by God.

Though we look back with horror at the cruel persecutions in Spain and elsewhere which the Black Friars adopted in the pursuit and punishment of what they, through their narrow theological views, deemed dangerous heresy, we cannot withhold our admiration of the Christlike devotion and self-sacrifice which their Order exhibited during the first century of its labours in England. Truly indeed they gave themselves a ransom for many, and thus did much to evangelize the masses. Their coming to Ipswich was a blessed thing for the people.

* Gasquet's *Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries*.

† Hook's *Lives of the Archbishops*, Vol. 3.



AUTO-GRAYURE

Thes. Chambres, 4793

THE CORNHILL

AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS.



OWARDS the close of the last Century the Cornhill, although of limited area, presented many objects of interest to the antiquary. It was almost surrounded with buildings three, four, and five centuries old, each of which was, in some way or other, inseparably connected with our town history and corporate life. The changed aspect of many parts of Ipswich is a source of wonder to the oldest inhabitant. In no spot has the change been more remarkable than on the Cornhill. There the transformation has been so complete as to sweep away what were its distinctive features—the Shambles, the Moot Hall, and the Market Cross.

THE SHAMBLES

Stood at the south-east corner of the Cornhill, and occupied part of the site now covered by the Post Office. The building, constructed chiefly of wood, formed three sides of a quadrangle, fronting east, west, and north, the open part to the south being used as a Herb Market. It was three stories high. The external façades on the Cornhill, or market level, were open, the over-sailing first floor being carried on massive pillars of wood, with moulded caps and bases. These pillars divided the chief front into six wide bays, within which, a few feet recessed, the butchers' stalls were arranged. Arches, four-centred in design, made of the best oak, supported the first floor, in which each bay over one of the stalls below was sub-divided into two by a post of lesser scantling than the pillars, the spaces between being filled up with windows, which lighted a gallery extending the whole length of the Cornhill front. Above was a continuous arcade of slight wood work. A broad flight of steps from the inside led up to it, and the Bailiffs granted orders for admission to this grand stand whenever such attractive spectacles as burning a heretic or baiting a bull occurred to gratify passion or afford amusement. Loyalty to the King and constitution was rather ostentatiously manifested every 29th of May, when the Christ's Hospital boys, attired in new clothes, with gilt oaken apples or sprigs in their caps, assembled in the gallery, and were regaled with light refreshment, in commemoration of the day. Rooms at the back of the gallery were let to working wool-combers and other traders.

The spandrils of the arches on the market level were filled in with carvings, and the ceiling of the arcaded walk beneath the gallery was probably vaulted in plaster. The principal pillars rose above this floor, and supported, on the north side three lath and plaster gables, which did not range vertically with the bays beneath. Each gable was finished with enriched barge boards meeting in the centre at a round knob, or finial. The east and west sides of the Shambles were similar in construction to this front, excepting that the projecting gables on the upper floor were continued for only one bay on the return side. On the north roof, rising from the inner side of the quadrangle, was a bell turret, consisting of a circular canopy, carried upon four slender wooden columns.

The carvings in the spandrils of the basement arches, to which allusion has been made, were ornamental devices and displayed considerable merit, but when the building was pulled down they found their destiny in a builder's yard; with two exceptions they became reduced to "kindling." In one spandrill the carver portrayed, with much spirit, the slaughtering of a bull, in another that of a ram. One of these pieces was sold by auction a few years ago, and went out of the town; the other is preserved in the Ipswich Museum.

When were these Shambles erected? Tradition asserts in the days of Cardinal Wolsey, but evidence is wanting to support the tradition. Corporation Records declare that the "flesh stalls" were "newly built" in 1583 (the same phrase is used in 1378), timber being brought from Ulverstone Hall for that purpose. This indicates pretty strongly that the building was erected at a date much earlier than the birth of the Cardinal. The Flesh Market in 1346 was let for £10 a year, a rental which shows that it must have been a large building. The only constructive details that will assist in fixing an approximate date, are the four-centred arches on the ground floor, which indicate fourteenth century work. There is no evidence that the Shambles, or Butchery, existed elsewhere than on the Cornhill. In the 2nd Richard II. (1378) mention is made of a "flesh stall" newly built. In the next century the terms "Butchery" and "Market" are used, instead of Shambles. In 1461-2 John Brown was admitted a free Burgess and granted a stall in the Butchery. In 1468 every butcher was compelled to sell his flesh in the Market. From the Corporate Records it is evident that the buying and selling of food was hedged round by a series of minute Municipal ordinances. In 1483 a townsman was subject to a fine of 6s. 8d., if he bought flesh of any butcher who had not a stall in the Market; butchers were permitted to sell their tallow only to the two Common Chandlers, who were appointed by the Corporation; they were in addition liable to a fine of forty shillings if they sold meat at their own houses on a market day. These regulations will provoke a smile, but others testify in the strongest manner to the soundness of the burghers' judgment. Thus:—As cattle had been stolen in the country and the carcasses sold in Ipswich, it was ordained that country butchers should bring to the Shambles on market days the hides and skins of the carcasses they offered for sale. There was a well in the Shambles, bricked round in the old style for windlass and bucket. Round this well—a pump was placed over it in 1650—the hides and skins were exposed. Butchers might sell them at any time of the day, but they could not be removed from the market till after the clock had struck one, and then only by the permission of one of the fleshwardens.

Extensive repairs in the reign of Elizabeth inaugurated a new era in the history of the Shambles, and considerably improved rentals resulted. In 41st Elizabeth (1599) the Chamberlains were not allowed to let the corner stalls in the Shambles under 20s. a year; the annual rent of the Middle Stalls was fixed at 16s., and in the following year the Chamberlains were made responsible for all arrears. A fine of 1s. was inflicted on every butcher who offered for sale the flesh of any bull that had not been baited for one hour on the Cornhill on the day it was killed. The custom commenced in the reign of Edward III., and was enforced until omitted in the Ipswich Paving and Lighting Act of 1793, poor beasts having been cruelly baited in the reign of George III. In the Chamberlain's Accounts for 1648, the following entries may be found:—

"To John Herne, for discovery of unbayed bulls	-	-	-	-	13s. 4d.
To Joseph Hobert, for a bull collar	-	-	-	-	3s. 6d.
To Roger Withe, for bull rope	-	-	-	-	3s. 4d."

Among the Batley M.S. at the British Museum is the original receipt as under:—

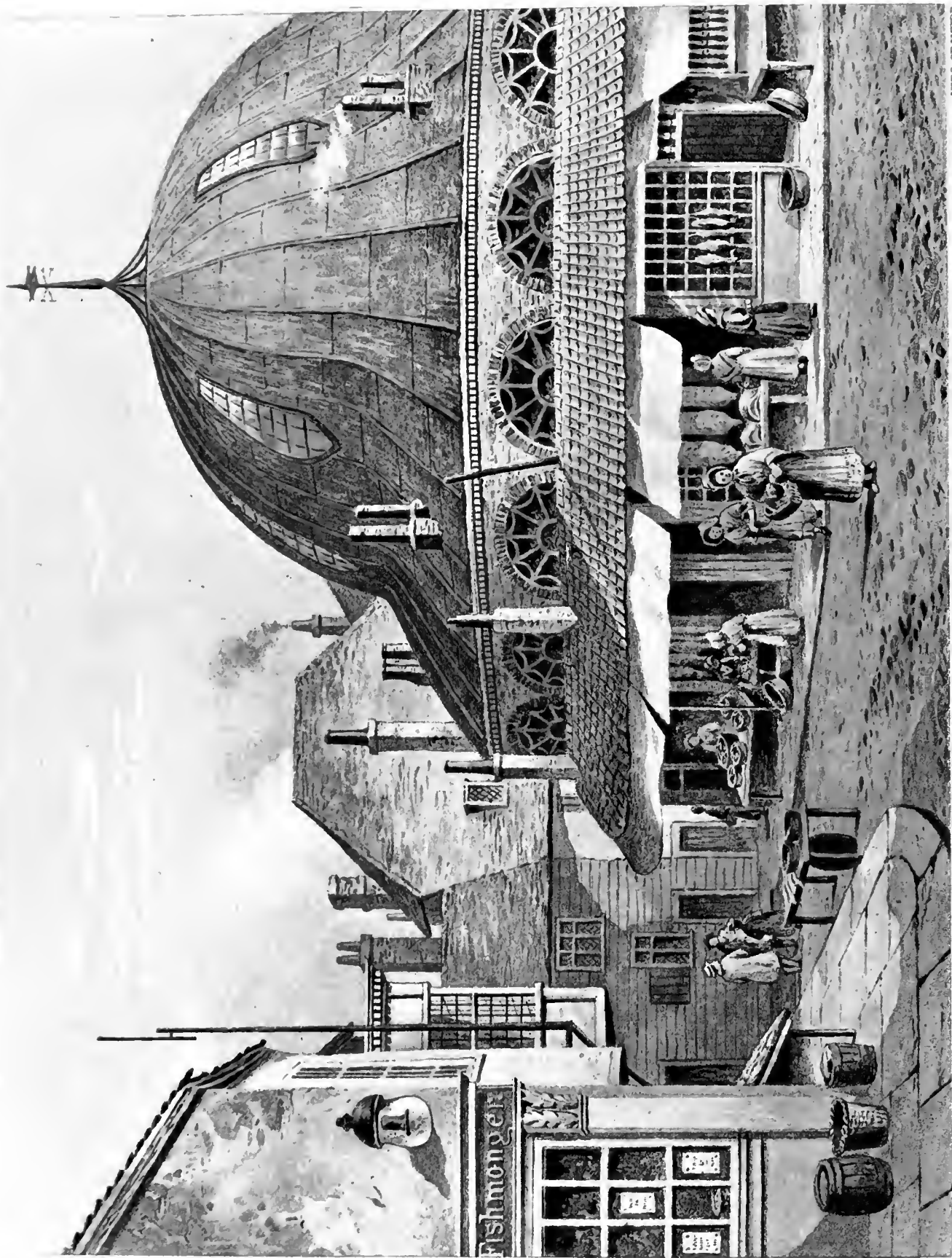
"Ffor workmanshapp and stuff about the paueing, when the bull ringall was broken up, about the said bull ringall	-	-	-	-	1s. 6d.
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September 28th, 1676. Received then the contents of this bill by me, JOHN PAYNE."

Clarke, in his "History of Ipswich," mentions that there was a popular impression that the Shambles were erected by Cardinal Wolsey. Wodderspoon, alluding to this tradition, states that they were said to have been erected by the Cardinal's father, and that the head of Wolsey, or that of his father, carved in wood, was placed over the entrance.* For these statements there is no foundation in fact.

It has oftentimes been a matter for regret that so little is known of Thomas Wolsey, who had a world wide reputation, but respecting whom the records of the borough in which he was born are almost silent. When Mr. Jeaffreson arranged the Charters, Deeds, and MS.S. of the

* Historic Sites of Suffolk.



AUTO-GRAYURE

The Rotunda 1805.

Ipswich Corporation, this silence was to some extent accounted for. He discovered that the Records had sustained serious losses. From the close of Edward the Fourth's reign to the 17th year of Elizabeth there is scarcely a single file or packet of all the letters that were sent to the Corporate body from Lords of the Council and other State officials. The missing documents probably related to the family of Wolsey, or to the Cardinal himself.

The only entries that came to light respecting the Wolseys were in the Chamberlain's accounts of payments to a person named Wolsey, for the performance of one of the most menial of occupations in connection with the Shambles:—

1585. Book of the accounts of receipts and payments of Robert Knaff and John Raynberd, Chamberlaynes.

Item. Paid to Mother Wolsey for her paynes in clensing the Corne Hill, the Butcherage, and the New Keye, for her whole yeres wages, xxs.

1587, 3 April. Item, paid to the Widow Wolsey for her wages, vs.

„ 14 June. Item, paid to the Widow Wolsey by warrant, vs.

„ [Without date.] Item, paid to Elizabeth Wolsey, skavenger, for her wages, vs.

„ 25 December. Item, paid to Elizabeth Wolsey, skavenger, for her wages, vs.

The Shambles, like most old buildings, did not improve by age. Rough usage produced effects, and towards the close of the 18th century, the structure, in parts, exhibited signs of decay. A desire arose for its removal. The idea, however, slumbered until a free burgess of some influence, Mr. George Gooding, an architect and surveyor, made a visit to Paris. Whilst there, he became so enamoured of the Halle au Blé (Corn Market) that he returned home determined that posterity should know something of him through a similar building which he would build in place of the old Shambles. The subject, broached in December, 1793, was favourably received, and in the following January a plan was laid before an Assembly Meeting of the Burgesses and at once adopted. Mr. Gooding proposed to take down the Shambles at his own expense and to erect in their stead a new building, he being allowed to convert the old materials to his own use, the Corporation to grant him a lease of the place for sixty years, at an annual rent of twenty pounds. Such a lease was signed, and the foundation stone of the new building was laid by the Bailiffs on the 15th February, 1794. The structure then erected was dignified with the name of The Rotunda.

THE ROTUNDA

Was circular in plan, the ground floor on the outer ring being divided and arranged into a series of butcher's stalls and shops facing outwards, behind which were rooms for residential purposes for the traders. The central space was left open to the cupola as a Market House. The apartments were in two stories, the upper one being at the back of the shops over and behind the first floor, the roof being carried up as a low domical vault. Some of the shops looking on to the Cornhill and Herb Market were open stalls, others were glazed with small oblong panes with bull's eyes, these panes being considered sufficiently ambitious by leading tradesmen a century since; the gospel of plate-glass had not been proclaimed.

Directly over this fringe of shops was a continuous low and nearly flat roof, covered with pantiles and extending back the uniform depth of the shops. On this roof a series of semi-circular headed windows rested, each comparatively large, resembling gigantic fanlights, affording light to the living rooms behind and to the small sleeping rooms above. A second sloping tiled roof, carried on slightly projecting timbers, was placed above these windows. This was broken into here and there by low chimneys, which, with their capped pots, were more unsightly and obtrusive than picturesque. From this level a curving bulbous roof spanned the internal area. It was constructed of beams and rafters, cased with wood and painted, and agreeably broken into by a series of eight narrow glazed lights. The cupola, somewhat steep in pitch, was covered with lead, and from the apex sprang a dwarf flagstaff, carrying a weather cock, which served as a

finial. A singular constructional feature (of which the architect was very proud) was that not a nail was used in the fabric, which was almost entirely of wood.

The structure as a whole, although of bold design and picturesque effect, was too poorly executed to be pronounced a success. The Parisian model combined strength and utility. The Ipswich copy was, even to the indulgent critic, poor. Inadequate provision for ventilation made it very offensive, and on sanitary grounds it was condemned (January, 1810), as a nuisance, within sixteen years of its erection. The following significant extract relating to the bargain with the builder of the condemned Rotunda has been taken from the Corporation Records :—

“ 26th July, 1810. Ordered that the Bailiffs do forthwith treat with Mr. George Gooding for the purchase of the Rotunda at the price of twelve hundred pounds, and that the purchase money be paid at the rate of one hundred pounds per annum (or at a greater rate, at the option of the Corporation) with interest until the whole is discharged, and that this order be acted upon as soon as the actual possession is delivered.”

THE MARKET CROSS.

In the seventeenth century the Market Cross was in most towns, particularly in those devoted to trade, a structure of some account. It was a place of shelter for country people who came to do business, was usually erected on the most public spot in the town, and where an ancient preaching cross had preceded it. The octagonal was a favourite form. Of such form are those at Chichester, which Britton characterizes as grand in design and elegant in execution; and Malmesbury, both still standing. That at Leicester was also octagonal. The designer of the Market Cross at Ipswich followed the fashion, without attempting similar architectural pretensions. The Cross was, however, almost as useful as those of greater dignity, and served no less important purposes. Its demolition in 1812, after having for nearly two centuries been its central feature, very largely detracted from the picturesque appearance of the Cornhill. Now that the Mediæval Town Hall, the Renaissance Shambles, the Classic Market Cross, and the Edwardian and Tudor timber and plastered houses with overhanging upper stories have been swept away, it is difficult for the younger generation to realize the appearance of the Cornhill a century ago.

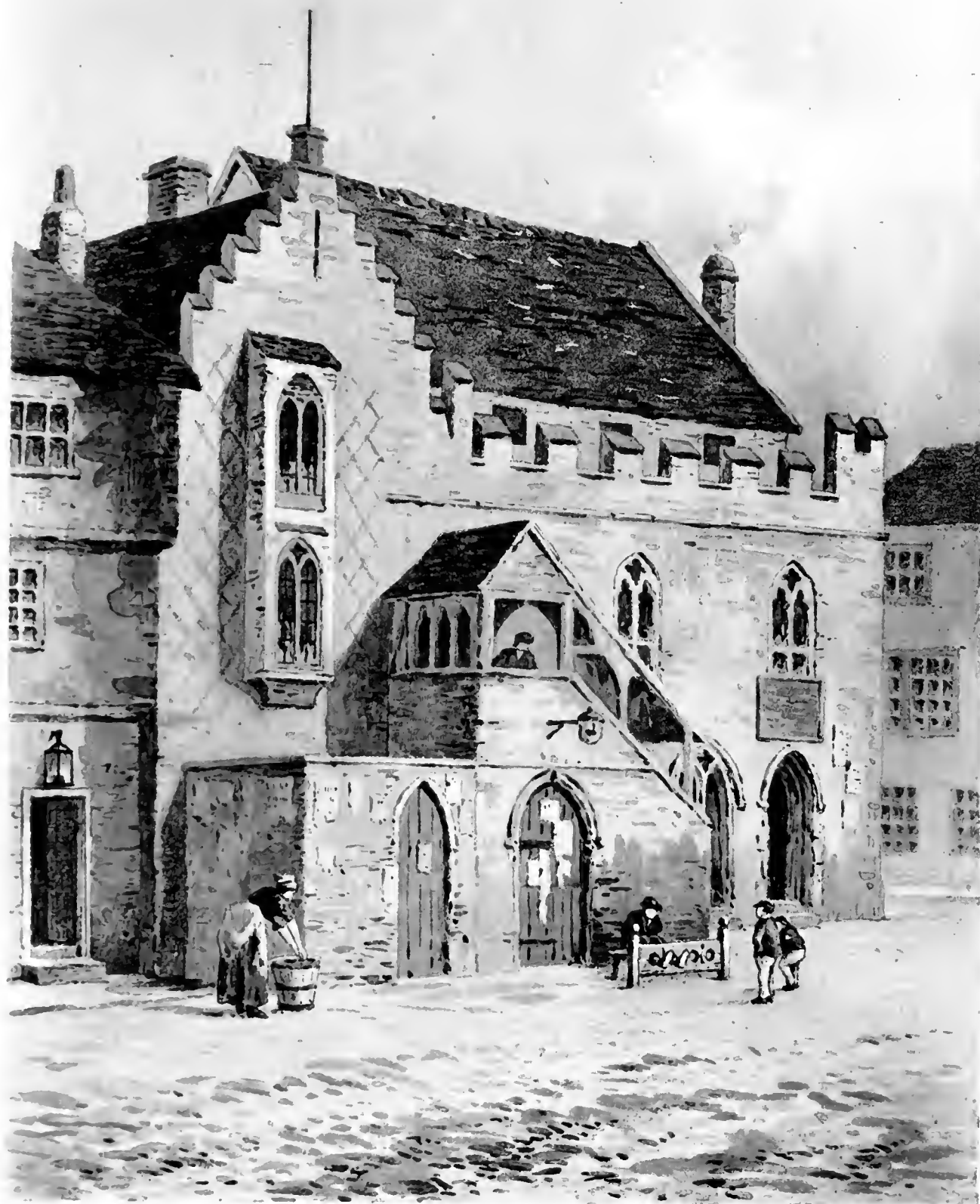
To the east of the centre of the Cornhill, and about eighteen feet from the pavement on the north side, this Market Cross stood from 1628 to 1812. In its construction stone, oak, and lead were employed with highly satisfactory results. It consisted of a canopied stand, carried on eight Doric pillars of stone, of excellent proportions. It was open at the sides, and surmounted by an elaborate terminal post and cross of considerable height, on which a statue was set. The pillars supported a framework of elliptical arches, carrying in their turn an entablature and coved cornice, with embattled parapet above. Over each column was a bold over-sailing truss, carved with masks, and rising above the general level of the battlements into a stop-block, on the face of which was sculptured in relief a conventional treatment of the snake-encircled head of Medusa. The whole of this portion of the Cross, which was executed in oak, was covered with elaborate and freely designed carvings, all details being large in scale and vigorous in treatment. From the centre of each of the depressed arches hung a square pendant, and the spandrels of the arches were filled in with shields, bearing armorial devices, said to have been those of Daundy, Bloss, Long, and Sparrowe, and two tradesmen's marks, C.A. and B.K.M. All the carvings were Classic in design and treatment, and bold and free in execution. Their character may be studied in the example preserved in the Ipswich Museum.

Over the really ornamental wooden frame-work rose a ribbed canopy and cupola of wood, covered with lead, and ogee in form. The king-post in the centre of the roof, to which it was framed, was supported on cross beams just above the level of the eaves. This king-post was



Ant. Granger

The Market Cross & Tavern Street 1785.



AUTO-GRVURE

The Town Hall, 1810.

carried above the dome as a square terminal, carved on each of the four faces, with the figure of a cupid supporting the stone ball above. This spherical member supported in its turn a deeply undercut Maltese cross, and on this was placed the figure of Justice, with her usual attributes—the sword and scales—to remind, as the fashion went, all the trading class that they must be true and just in all their dealings. This statue, which was designed as Flora, was in 1723 presented to the town by Mr. Francis Negus, of Dallinghoo, M.P. for the Borough.

The history of the Cross may be briefly narrated. Wodderspoon says that a Cross was first erected in this town in 1510, and that the benefactor was Edmund Daundy, but Bacon's "Annals" are silent on the point. Daundy was elected as one of the Bailiffs in that year, and during his term of office he founded a chauntry in the church of St. Lawrence. The cross then erected was probably an upright ornamental pillar of stone, examples of which abounded in the fifteenth century, and many of which were patterns of lightness and beauty. Daundy is known to have been favourable to the Friars, and Lady Daundy had apartments in the Black Friars' Monastery at the time of its dissolution. The pillar Cross, in all probability, was erected by him in the most central place of the town, to enable the preaching Friars to address large gatherings of the people. This Cross seems to have lasted about a century, when the Reformation had entirely changed the aspect of affairs. The Friars had vanished; but the Cross was felt to be useful, and in 1610 Mr. Benjamin Osborne bequeathed the sum of £50 towards the erection of a new one. Mr. Osborne's gift was not paid until 1628, when the Corporation obtained £44 from his executors for the purpose named in his will. The new building was immediately commenced. Other persons contributed towards the cost, and armorial bearings of the donors were carved on wood, and placed round the lower circle of the dome.

The Market Cross made known to us by the drawings of George Frost is that erected in or about 1628. The classic knowledge shown in the details points to the early part of the seventeenth century as the probable date of its erection. The old corporate body, with all their extravagance, had occasional fits of economy, and it was, we suppose, when in one of these moods that the following resolution was placed on the books:—"August, 1745. Ordered that a Committee do examine whether the repairs done to the Market Cross by Mr. Henry Bond, late town treasurer, were necessary, and the charge for the same reasonable."

The general outline of the Cross was pleasing. The several features harmonized in themselves and with their surroundings. The only point open to criticism was the disproportionate height of the finial, increased to an awkward over-balance when the statue, presented by Mr. Negus, was added. The diameter of the building was 28 feet, and it afforded more than 600 feet of standing room. Its wanton destruction is to be regretted by all lovers of the picturesque.

THE TOWN HALL.

The Town Hall, which stood at the south-west corner of the Cornhill at the commencement of the present century, was St. Mildred's Church adapted to municipal purposes. The church is not mentioned in Domesday, but this is no proof of non-existence. Its dedication suggests two or three centuries of existence in the Saxon age, and in the Conqueror's purely financial survey its omission might arise from its having no property liable to dues. Very few particulars can be had respecting it, and what can be obtained fail to prove that it had a parochial character. In Bacon's "Annals" St. Mildred's Church is mentioned, 8th Edward II. (1314-5) but the same authority in 1377 speaks of the building as Mildred's "Chappell." In the 6th Edward III. (1332-3) Bacon, in describing the situation of a tenement, speaks of St. Mildred's Parish, but as this is the only instance in which the word "parish" is used, this reference cannot, in the absence of the names of incumbents in the institution books of the diocese, be allowed to have authority. The church existed at the time of the "Norwich Taxation" (1291) and through the kindness of Dr. Bensley, the Tanner MS.S. in the Diocesan Registry at

Norwich have been examined, but the only entry discovered was this—"Church of St. Mildred, not in Macro, amongst the spiritual valuations, but amongst the temporal." The Macro here referred to is Dr. Cox Macro, but where his collections are, or whether they still exist, is unknown. We have said that the church is noticed in the Norwich Taxation. In plain English the notice there given runs thus—The Prior of St. Peter, Ipswich, has it for his own special use, and causes it to be of service to the Church—in other words, serves it by a chaplain. Procuration, three shillings and four pence.

According to Clarke, the Prior and Convent of Holy Trinity granted to the Burgesses of Ipswich, in 1393, a piece of ground in the parish of St. Mildred, 24 feet by 18 feet, the north end abutting on the Cornhill. In Bacon's "Annals" this transaction is not mentioned, and Clarke does not give his authority. This probably was the ground occupied by the red brick portion of the Town Hall on the east of St. Mildred's Church and called the Hall of Pleas. The interior of the church was converted into two stories by the insertion of a floor, the lower portion being sub-divided into kitchen and cellarage, whilst the upper part was arranged as an Assembly Hall. The Hall of Pleas seems to have been added to the original building in 1435-45, as John Deker was then appointed to superintend the work, and a Committee was nominated to co-operate with him. Ten years later surveyors were appointed to look after the erection of a new chamber, probably a Council Chamber, at the end of the Hall of Pleas.

The building, though called the Town Hall and sometimes the Moot Hall, was really the old Guildhall. As viewed from the Cornhill it consisted of two very diverse buildings. The larger portion to the west was faced with plaster, and had Late Fourteenth Century two-light windows. Over these was an embattled and coped parapet of brick, while behind this the building was recessed so as to form a quasi-clerestory, above which rose a high pitched roof, covered with tiles. A large and ugly porch, reached by a flight of steps, and having a square landing place, roofed but open to the roadway, led to the room in which public business was transacted. This staircase was open at the bottom somewhat like a lych gate at the entrance to a churchyard, whilst beneath the highest portion a doorway led to cellars and other apartments. The porch distantly reminds one of a much more beautiful example of the twelfth century, still forming the approach to the King's School at Canterbury, and the whole treatment, in two stories, with covered staircase to upper floor, is paralleled in the curious fifteenth century church of Bramerton, near Barnstaple. The building throughout appeared like work of the early years of the 15th century.

The second portion of the building to the left was of red brickwork, with diamond patterns in bluish tinting on either side of a projecting stone oriel two stories in height. The front rose with a high, row stepped gable, and the whole effect closely resembled the still-existing gate of Archdeacon Pykenham's, in Northgate Street, Ipswich, which is known to have been built in 1471.

When this building was pulled down in 1812, a portion of the interior of the old church, with some two-light windows, was brought to view. Two of the windows, which were comparatively small, seem to have belonged to the south aisle of the church. The third was placed under a large and probably a three-light window. The wall in which the windows were found had been raised at a later date to serve the purpose of the upper room, built to accommodate the Corporate body at their official assemblies. The lower part of the building was in the fifteenth century used as kitchen and cellarage at the feasts of the Corpus Christi Guilds, the "Sociary," or feasting room, being a part of the building.

Roman London is said to be entirely underground, and the windows of the church of St. Mildred when brought to light showed that the surface of the ground at the time the church was erected was very much lower than the level of the present Cornhill. This accretion of earth was further proved during the progress of the main sewerage works, when the original soil was found some four or five feet below the existing level of Tavern Street.

The old Town Hall, as already stated, was pulled down in 1812, and the Corporate body

being, in common parlance, "hard up," the site for some years was left vacant. At last, on the 4th of June, 1818, the foundation stone of the second Town Hall was laid. The building was a sixteenth century version of a design of Palladio's—plain, heavy, and tasteless. After standing forty years increased accommodation was needed, and the present elegant and commodious structure took its place.

Turning from the buildings to the associations that are inseparably connected with the Cornhill, one is struck with the barbarism which was practised. From time immemorial the Cornhill had been the place where punishments of various kinds had been inflicted. During the sixteenth century it was on several occasions lighted up by the flames of blazing faggots, which surrounded the dying victims of cruel persecutions. Death by burning must be among the most horrible of punishments, yet fanaticism tried to prolong the sufferings of victims by using green broom with the faggots. Items connected with these executions may be found in the Corporation Books, for this brutality was all in the way of business.

"1556. Accounts of the Receipts and payments of Robert Sparrow and Jaffery Cave, Chamberlains:—

Item, paid for a wryte for the excicusion of the ij women whiche ware burnede - - - - -	vs.
Item, paid to John Ceryson for certain yorns apertaining to the excicusion of the said women - - - - -	iijs. iiijd.
Item, for ij lodes of wode and a lode of brome, and for carring the same into the towne-house - - - - -	viijs. iiijd.
Item, paid for a stacke at the said excicusion - - - - -	vid.
Item, paid to iiij men for carring of woode and brome to the place of excicusion	iijs. viiid.

Those "good old times!" But perhaps the most degrading of punishments used by our humane and discriminating ancestors was the Pillory, which was ancient in character and barbarous in practice. Originally its use was confined to cheats, perjurers, and thieves, but in the eighteenth century men who had committed very trivial offences were sometimes sentenced to the same kind of punishment as those guilty of disgusting crimes. Thus in 1776, Thomas Garwood was put in the Pillory at Ipswich for compounding an infraction of the law in not having on a waggon the words, "Common stage waggon," whilst a few years previously Lieutenant Wye stood there for a disgusting offence. An ill-mannered mob frequently mal-treated those who were deserving of pity, but when punishment was inflicted for a heinous crime public resentment was inflamed, and the poor wretch was greeted by volleys of rotten eggs and filth. Whether this was virtue in a rage or a mere coarse display of brutality under false pretences the reader must judge. Passion is sometimes more excited by the detection of crime than by the crime itself. As at public executions in the present century, so great was the eagerness to witness the punishment that the Cornhill was filled with spectators. Carts, waggons, and other vehicles, which blocked the traffic, were crowded with men and women, morbidly anxious to see the helpless criminal writhe with agony whilst pelted by a brutal populace.

The "Pillory" seems to have been used as an instrument of punishment from the Norman Conquest to the nineteenth century. Ordinances in the Little Domesday Book provide that men guilty of forestalling fish coming to market—that was buying them before they arrived at the Quay, so as to sell them in the town at a high price—were for a second offence to be placed in the Pillory. If tainted fish were offered for sale, the fishmonger; if bad meat, the butcher, but only on the second offence, was stuck in the Pillory. This instrument of torture, like the gallows on Rushmere Heath, was evidently a fixture on the Cornhill, as an ancient bye-law of the borough ordained that inferior meat should be exposed on a stall beneath the Pillory, and there sold for what it really was. At the Record office is a letter dated July 27th, 1640, from Sir Lionel Tollemache, complaining of some new Canons, which were made public by being nailed to the Pillory in Ipswich Market Place.

The "Stocks" are a more familiar institution. They remained in town and country to a

comparatively recent date. They were used for the punishment of rogues, vagabonds, and drunkards, and prior to 1607 those in Ipswich were fixed at the Bridewell. In that year the Corporation resolved that men thus punished should be publicly exposed and the Stocks here accordingly found a "local habitation" on the Cornhill, in front of the Town Hall. Whipping at the cart's tail was another delicate mode of punishment, for the carrying out of which the Cornhill was specially selected. The prisoner, with his back naked to the loins, was tied to the back of a cart. The cart was drawn by a horse three times round the Cornhill, whipping with a cat of nine tails being continued during the circuit. From the cart's tail the culprit was taken back to prison.

In the middle of the sixteenth century whipping seems to have been considered the proper thing for a certain class of offenders. In the Chamberlains' accounts, 1569, are the following items :—

Payd for carting and whipping of a young wetcche	-	-	-	xiid.
Payd to Browne for whipping of a wentche that came from Woodbridge-				viiid.
Payd for cartyng and whipping of the Flemyng	-	-	-	xiid.

St. George's Fair was for several centuries held on the Cornhill. It was at one time a sort of three days' carnival, to which people of all ranks resorted. A history of the fair would be an interesting chapter in the history of the town. In early times fairs were useful in drawing people together at stated intervals. They were centres at which the greatest part of the trade of the kingdom was transacted. Generally granted by Royal Charter, they yielded considerable profit in the shape of tolls. The grant of St. Margaret's Fair was made by Henry II. to the Prior and Convent of Holy Trinity; that of St. James's Fair, by King John, to the Lepers of St. Mary Magdalen; but the grant of St. George's Fair has not been discovered. That it was of ancient date is clear, as in 10 Henry VIII., 1519, the day of holding the fair was changed, in consequence of its falling on a festival day. Urged by the Rev. Watche Ward, the Puritans in 1644 made an unsuccessful attempt to abolish it. Two years previously the Bailiffs had ordered the Treasurer to pay to Mr. Ward the sum of twenty shillings, as an expression of their gratification at his excellent sermon delivered on the first day of the fair.

Long before the commencement of this century the fair had lost all signs of its trading character. Amusements, eating and drinking, and noisy festivity had been its characteristics. Giants, dwarfs, and monstrosities of all kinds were there; conjurors to exhibit their sleight of hand; learned pigs, which could do sums in arithmetic and tell fortunes by cards; waxwork exhibitions and theatres. The most noisy of the latter was owned by one "Samwell," a fat man in a tight satin jacket, the buffoonery of whose clowns on the stage outside was an immense attraction. Wombwell's Menagerie came once at fair time, but "Samwell" held his ground. The best shows were lighted by numberless variegated lamps, and were rendered attractive by bands of music. The carnival at that time was opened on the third of May. The covered stalls for toys, fancy goods, gingerbread and confectionery, sometimes extended into Tavern Street, and lines led towards King Street. A Free Burgess was clerk of the fair, his perquisites being 20 per cent. on the amount collected as tollage, the rest being paid to the Town Treasurer. The license and riot which characterised the proceedings at length aroused the Town Council, and in 1859 they resolved that the fair should be no longer tolerated in "Central Ipswich."

The foregoing pages have not exhausted all that could be said about the Cornhill and its associations. No allusion has been made to the political dramas played upon it, nor to the grand celebrations of birthday anniversaries in the reign of George III., when of all things a huge bonfire was lighted. It will be sufficient to record that the Cornhill, as the centre of the town, was from time immemorial the arena for stately pageants, grotesque performances, and degrading punishments—a centre at which local life gave expression to its joy, and offended law enforced its own vindication.

EARLY HISTORY.



THE origin of towns is generally enveloped in obscurity, and that of Ipswich forms no exception to the rule. Nearly all the prominent cities and towns in England have some characteristic of their own, by which it is not hard to find for each of them a distinctive feature. Colchester is of Roman origin, Bury St. Edmund's owes its rise to an abbey, Windsor and Richmond each clustered round a castle, Norwich stands near the site of a Roman town. Ipswich is indebted to no such cause for its rise and progress. Probably its situation at the head of a navigable river and within easy distance of the sea favoured its development from a small village into a cluster of townships, which in turn expanded into a borough.

Nothing has been discovered to prove that a town existed where Ipswich now stands before England came under the Saxon rule, but it should be stated that relics of occupation by ancient Britons, in the shape of flint implements, have been found in the neighbourhood. The Romans also left their mark. The tessellated pavement brought to light some years since from beneath the soil at the back of Brook's Hall indicates the site of a Roman villa of good dimensions, whilst the numerous fragments of Romano-British pottery and large number of Roman coins found at Wherstead show that the Romans had a settlement on the banks of the Orwell. These discoveries, however, afford no evidence that the town itself has the slightest claim to having once been a Roman settlement.

The Kingdom of East Anglia, which was formed in the sixth century, included the district of Ipswich, and there can be little doubt as to the Saxon origin of the town. Its name, which is certainly Anglo-Saxon, is strong presumptive evidence as to that fact. Clarke, Wodderspoon, and a cotemporary writer have followed Kirby in declaring that the town derived its name from the river Gipping. This declaration, if it might do in the eighteenth century, will not do now, and a well-known Anglo-Saxon scholar, Professor Skeat, of Cambridge, writing to us, says, "It is quite impossible that the river Gipping can have given its name to the town. The idea that it did so conflicts with the first and most elementary law of etymology, for a simple word cannot be derived from a compound (or longer) one. We cannot derive the adjective *real* from the verb *to realise*, since the verb is extended from, and therefore derived from, the adjective *real*. Similarly, Gipp-ing, containing the well-known suffix *ing*, is extended from, and therefore derived from the simple name *Gip*."

"The real state of the case is this. There was a man named Gip, and his creek was called Gip's-creek. He had some descendants who were called Gipp-ings, 'ing' being the suffix applied to children, descendants, and tribes. That this tribe gave its name to the river is a perfectly reasonable supposition. In other words, 'Gipp' and 'Gipping' are of course closely related names, but 'Gip' is the shorter and therefore the older. When the town is first mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (A.D. 993) it is called 'Gipes-wic.' Gipes is the genitive of 'Gip,' presumably a man's name, and 'wic' is a word borrowed from the old Scandinavian, and signifying a creek. As to the sense of 'wic' it so happens that there are two such words, both used as place-names—(1) 'wic,' a town, not a true English word, but merely borrowed from the Latin *vicus*; (2) 'wic,' from the Scandinavian, and now known in Icelandic in the form *vik*. No. 1 appears in Warwick, but No. 2 in Woolwich, Greenwich, and Ipswich. In both these words, the vowel *i* was originally long, but was soon shortened on account of its occurrence in that part of the compound word which was unaccented. It is also worth while to notice that the initial *G* acquired the sound of *y* on account of the following *i*, as in other cases. Thus *Gipes-wic* regularly became *Yipswich*, from which the modern name comes by the loss of the initial *Y*-sound."

The government of the town at the time it comes into historic notice affords further evidence of its Saxon origin. Certain customs and regulations were in accordance with Saxon laws, such as the dower of a married woman to a moiety of what freehold the husband died seized of within the Borough, and the lawful or full age of minors at fourteen years.

When the Saxons over-ran this Eastern district is uncertain. Nothing is known of the circumstances of its conquest, of the fate of its inhabitants, or of the settlement of the conquerors within its boundaries. The Britons who escaped slaughter, and survived the event which robbed them of their lands, were doubtless settled as slaves on the estates of the victors. A good portion of the boundary, afterwards known as "Gipeswic," had probably been cleared and made fertile by its original inhabitants, and the Saxons, with a wit of which nobody can complain, appropriated the spot and divided it among themselves. The unallotted portions became common land, as Westerfield Green, Cauldwell Heath, and Rushmere Heath.

The Gipeswic of this early age must not be confounded with the small town fenced with earth which, some three or four centuries later, was laid waste by the Danes. The Saxons abhorred fenced towns, and the dyke surrounding Gipeswic must have been made long after they had formed a settlement, and when, from the ravages of foes, they found the value of earthworks as a means of defence. Gipeswic in its early stage was a large village community, extending from Westerfield Green to King John's Ness, and from Spright's Lane to Rushmere Heath. It was a piece of the country, but a piece containing eight thousand acres, organized and governed precisely in the same form as the hundreds around it, and the town portion was simply a part of the district near the river, where the inhabitants lived closer together and population increased. The boundary of that day it has retained, and on the fields, pasture, and waste, which this district embraced, shepherds and labourers held common land. The broad acres which were the property of the free burgesses in the last century, were the same as those over which our Saxon forefathers had rights as folk-land, in the eighth century.

The allotment of the conquered land which followed the victory of the tribe settled the kindred freemen on their estates, and the townships, as they were called, were grouped into hundreds. The term "hundred" was originally military. It designated a hundred fighting men who had settled in a certain locality, but when the machinery of government had lost its simplest form, the term was applied to a district in which freeholders, united by mutual duties and responsibilities, formed a community for judicial administration, peace, and defence. From the unequal size of the hundreds it is reasonable to suppose that under the geographical hundred we have the variously sized districts in which the hundred warriors originally settled. Tradition asserts that King Alfred devised the arrangement of hundreds; it is more probable that he adopted what already existed, and made it a basis for rating purposes. Ipswich was treated as a half-hundred.

It is unknown how long the freeholders existed as such. The feudalism of the time of Alfred grew out of the freedom of an earlier age. Endeavours to trace the history of the period when the Saxons held sway over England show how little we know of the age in which the tribal king emerged into the national ruler, and when custom began to consolidate as written law. England was at an early period dotted with small kingdoms. Perpetual commotion and tribal wars were the result, and the freeholders, unequal singly to cope with their foes, were induced for the safety of their persons and property to surrender their lands into the hands of a Thegn, or over-lord, receiving them back laden with suit and service, but guarded by his powerful protection. The King became lord of those who had not surrendered to other lords and the community of Ipswich thus passed into the hands of the King himself.

Feudalism existed two or three centuries before mention is made of the town of Ipswich. The first notice that is known occurs in the Will of Bishop Theodred, Bishop of London and Hoxne, about A.D. 955, and runs thus:—* "And ic an Sat lond at Waldringfield Osgote mine

* Quoted by John Mitchell Kemble, Esq., in "Notes" respecting the "Bishops of East Anglia."—
Archæol. Inst. Gt. Britain, Norwich, 1847.

sustres sune, and mīn hage Sat ic binnin Gypeswich bouhte," showing that he gave to his sister's son land at Waldringfield and a farm which he had bought at Ipswich. Here the town is merely mentioned, but a few years later we have evidence that Gipes-wic must have been a trading place of considerable importance at the very time it was thus incidentally referred to by Bishop Theodred. When the Saxon King Eadgar was on the throne (959—975), the King's Moneyers had a settlement in Ipswich, and the first fact in the history of the Borough comes from this source. There are in existence silver pennies which are inscribed on the obverse EADGAR REX ANGLOR, and on the reverse LEOFRIC MOT GIP. Gip is here a contraction for Gipes-wic; and the inscription signifies that they were coined there by a moneyer named Leofric. This fact testifies that the town was of some importance when it was first brought into notice. There is no evidence to show on what principle the selection of towns was made, but it may be assumed that as the number which issued coins was limited, they were the most important in their districts. In the reign of Ethelred, no fewer than seventeen moneyers issued coins at Gipes-wic, and specimens of its mint from Eadgar to Henry III. may be seen at the British Museum.

The history of Ipswich, as far as printed records are concerned, begins with the Danish invasion in 993,* when the Saxon Chronicle records that Gipes-wic was plundered by the army of the sea kings. The Danes do not seem to have stayed in the town, but ravaged the place and passed on. The destruction of life and property on this occasion was so great that the people cowered panic-stricken before their foes. As the aim of the pirates was mainly plunder, the inhabitants along the coast were kept in continual terror. Under these circumstances, Siric, Archbishop of Canterbury, advised the King to purchase peace, and it is said that the terms agreed upon were ten thousand pounds in the shape of tribute. Clarke, in his "History of Ipswich," absurdly blunders when he states that this sum of ten thousand pounds was a fine inflicted by the Danes on the town of Ipswich, instead of being a tribute paid to them by the nation at large. This tribute was the origin of the Danegelt, a tax which soon became annual. Until this advice of the Archbishop was adopted, a purchased peace was unknown in England, and events proved that it only encouraged the Danes to become more frequent and more powerful in their invasions. Only two years after this enormous sum of money was paid, a large number of these piratical invaders landed near London, marched along the coast to Gipes-wic, where they laid all waste and continued at intervals to plunder and ravage the district.

The base treachery of the West Saxon King caused the Danes in 1010 to wreak their vengeance on the kingdom. A fleet, with the dreaded banner of the raven flying at the masthead, came swarming up the Orwell, and the marauding army landed at Gipes-wic. Shallow as the channel of our river may be supposed to have been eight hundred years ago, the long, narrow, and nearly flat-bottomed boats of the Danes, which drew only about five feet of water, were easily moored not far from the town. On this occasion the Danes marched direct to the Rushmere and Nacton Heaths to give battle to the Saxon General, Ulfketil. They achieved a signal victory, and were afterwards described as masters of East Anglia. The country was harried, monasteries and churches were plundered, men and women slaughtered. Cambridge was burnt, but the Chronicle is silent as to Ipswich. For nearly six years the struggle went on, but ultimately the West Saxon Realm collapsed, and Canute became master of the kingdom.

* Wodderspoon, through a printer's error, gives the date as 919 for 991, but this date requires a few words of explanation. "The chronology of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is somewhat confused. The earliest mention of Ipswich in the Parker M.S., in connection with the Battle of Maldon, is given under the date 993. The spelling there used is 'Gipeswic.'

"The very same mention of it also in connection with the Battle of Maldon is given in the later M.S.S. under the date 991. The spelling then used is 'Gypeswic.'

"Philologically, 'Gipes wic' is the better spelling. The spelling 'Gypeswic' with *y* is enough to show that these M.S.S. are late, as only the later scribes confused the sound of *i* with that of *y*."—*Professor Skeat*.

One of the blessings that supervened upon Canute coming to the throne was that of peace. The Saxon fear of the pirate vanished. The Dane was no longer an enemy. A large number became converts to the Christian faith; and as Christianity extended the Ecclesiastics became more and more rigid in their calls for abstinence and fasting. The supply of fish became a necessity for daily food, and fishing developed into a lucrative trade along the eastern coast. The regulations in the Little Domesday Book show, that in this trade Ipswich largely shared. A few years later the city of Dunwich paid sixty thousand herrings as part of its fee farm rent to the king. This shows how the men of this district were making use of the harvest of the sea. Ipswich, at the head of the Orwell, had a valuable position for trading purposes. Roads led into the town in all directions, and the river was only another highway to bring trade to its markets and to afford its inhabitants the means of intercourse with the Continent. The Danish element was strong among the householders, and the impulse and enterprise of these daring people aroused and stimulated a taste for trading among the inhabitants generally. The foundations of commerce in connection with the Port were laid at this era, and, although the Danish rule continued for a short time only after the reign of Canute, the trading element must have been well consolidated before his death.

In the invaluable Norman Record known as Domesday Book, Ipswich springs into historic light as a town with a borough organization. We had hoped that this record would give a picture of its social life during the reign of the Confessor, but the details are scanty, and we have to be satisfied with the names of a few owners and tenants in chief, and returns which are statistical and financial.

Ipswich in 1060 was a royal borough, and was treated as a half hundred, whilst Colchester and Cambridge ranked as hundreds. There were 538 burgesses paying custom to the King. The comparative importance of the town may be judged from the roll of burgesses. Thetford, a Bishop's see, and the chief place in East Anglia, had 943 burgesses, Norwich 665, Yarmouth 70, Sudbury 118, Clare 43, Beccles 26, Eye 25, Colchester 401. The Borough paid fifteen pounds yearly as rent to the King. Edith, queen of Edward the Confessor, and sister of Harold, had a grange here. Her manor contained about 480 acres of land, and to her was granted two-thirds of the revenue of the Borough as part of her dower. Her brother, Earl Guert, who also had a grange here, was Earl of the town, and received the other third of the revenue. In addition to this payment, the Borough also contributed for the King's household one gallon of honey, which was a staple article of food among our Saxon forefathers.

The 538 burgesses paid annually a gable rent, amounting probably to sixpence or sevenpence a year for each house. This burgage rent was in the nature of a ground rent, which in royal boroughs was received by the King, as lord, from the burgesses within his dominion. Houses had been built on land held by individuals as royal grants in former reigns; the tenants in those cases paid rents to their respective owners, the King claiming only from those who were styled the King's burgesses. For example, Wisgar, the patron of one of the two churches dedicated to St. Peter, had five burgesses and six houses in the town, besides fifteen burgesses in the suburb of Thurleston. The strong-minded Archbishop Stigand, who crowned Harold, had two houses in the Borough and jurisdiction over both tenants, who were burgesses. Wisgar was the largest tenant in the district, holding 820 acres, on which bordarii, villeins, and some freemen resided. The land belonged to the Church of St. Peter, and Wisgar appears as Patron of the Church and tenant of the land. Large tracts of country were at that time uncleared, sturdy oaks abounded, and the prowling wolf was a frequent visitor. Besides arable land, Wisgar had a wood for hogs, a run for sheep, meadow land, and a mill. The mill was invariably valuable, for tenants were compelled to bring their corn to be ground at the Lord's mill. Earl Guert had 240 acres of land and the third part of the profits of a mill. The Monks of Ely, in the name of the pious Etheldreda, who died in 675, held a manor consisting of 360 acres; the Rectory of St. Mary Stoke, and the land thereto attached, are a part of this property.

We hear only of burgesses as a class. As a body they had forty acres of land, for which they paid custom. From their holding so small a quantity of land the inference is that the majority of them were traders. Beyond this we get no notice of the burgesses or their rights; no statement as to whether they held one, two, or three houses; no account of the customs of the people, nor any notice of municipal officers.

Although no details are given as to the occupations of the 538 burgesses, it appears that within the boundaries of the Borough there were fifty-three free-men holding land of their own, and small plots belonging to other owners. Twelve of these dwelt on the land of Queen Edith, and occupied between them eighty acres belonging to her manor. The tenure was absolutely copyhold (though equal to freehold), in return for which they did service and paid custom to the King. In other words they paid what was equivalent to a rent (land in those days was valued at twopence per acre), and held themselves ready to attend Court-leet, or Port-moot, in the King's service whenever summoned by the Reeve.

We find also that there were in the Borough thirty bordarii—farm labourers of the highest class—who held their homesteads, with small parcels of land, on condition of performing defined service to the Lord of the Manor. This service was frequently that of supplying him with eggs, poultry, &c., and working on the land two or three days in the week. They were provided with huts, and fed when they worked on the Lord's land. Ten of these men were on the Queen's land, and they had between them eighty-six acres of her manor. The Survey also names twenty-four villeins in connection with the land at Ipswich, and five serfs or bondsmen, the lowest class of slaves. This class, of whom there were many in Suffolk in the days of the Confessor, were, with their wives and families, usually sold with the land. Their sons naturally grew up in the same state of bondage, and their daughters could not marry without the Lord's consent. All these held small portions of land, by which they fed themselves and their families. What we call rent was paid by the performance of work, such as hewing wood, cutting turf for fuel, or by acting as cowherds or swineherds.

Domesday proves that the inhabitants of Ipswich found their taxes much heavier under the Norman King than under his Saxon predecessor. The annual fee farm rent was raised from fifteen pounds and a gallon of honey to thirty-seven pounds, although the Borough had lost two-thirds of its tax-paying inhabitants. The burgesses were reduced to 210, and of these 100 were unable to pay more to the tax of the King than one penny *in capite*, and there were 328 empty houses. The empty houses and the poor burgesses point to a prosperity that had faded away. A largely reduced number of contributors had to furnish to the Crown a rental more than double that at which the Borough had been previously assessed. As neither pestilence, conflagration, nor war seems to have scourged the district, the empty dwellings and the impoverished condition of the burgesses were probably owing to the conflict between Harold and William.

Glancing at the town ecclesiastically we have no evidence as to when the parochial subdivisions were made. As it grew from a village into a town, churches were doubtless erected by the pious owners of land in the district, for use by themselves, their tenants and those in their employ. In the eighth century to build churches was quite fashionable. Perhaps a sense of religious obligation was keener then than it is to-day, or as good works their erection might be considered the key to the celestial gates. Whatever the motive, pious or selfish, Ipswich teemed with churches. According to Domesday there were thirteen in the town at the time of the Survey. Those within the walls were St. Mary (at the Tower), St. Michael, St. Lawrence, St. Peter, St. Stephen, and St. Mary (at the Elms). Those without the walls were Holy Trinity, St. George, St. Austin, and Stoke St. Mary. At Whitton stood St. Botolph—which was within the liberties. The whereabouts of St. Julian and also of a second church dedicated to St. Peter, have not been ascertained. St. Michael and St. Julian were probably destroyed by the great storm of 1287. The first there is little doubt was succeeded by St. Nicholas: may not the second have been in like manner succeeded by St. Matthew, which though an old edifice is not mentioned in Domesday?

The list shows that for a very limited population a great many churches were provided, but it must not be forgotten that the Anglo-Saxon Churches were small. Land of varying area belonged to each of those named. In some cases it was only an acre, in others of large extent. Some of them belonged to Priests, others to Laymen, but nothing is known of those who endowed them.

To trace the Ipswich of the eleventh century in the Ipswich of to-day is no easy task. Its aspect in those days is difficult to realize. If we could see a map of the district as it was 800 years ago, we should find the arable land divided into large fields. Each field was not, as now, the property of an individual owner, but was divided by strips of turf into pieces, measuring an acre. Each of these pieces belonged to a burgess, and some burgesses owned several. Cultivation was governed by custom. Once in every three years the cultivator must let each strip lie fallow, and during this fallow his neighbour's cattle might graze upon it. He might enclose his acre with a permanent fence, but if he did he lost the right of grazing on his neighbours' lands when they were fallow. In everything he did, he had to be very careful not to interfere with the rights of others. He could not plough without the help of his neighbours, as eight oxen formed a normal plough team, and co-operation was necessary to make up these teams.*

Turning from the outlying fields and meadows to the town itself, we shall find that a part of Ipswich was fenced with earthworks, nearly in the form of an oval. They were pierced with gates on the E., W., N., and S. From the West Gate to Major's Corner, and from the North Gate to the Quay, ran highways. The population was chiefly located in narrow lanes and streets, of which Cook Row and Stephen's Lane some sixty years ago were types. Along what is now known as Westgate and Tavern Streets were timber-framed houses with gables, and on the North side they had orchards or gardens, reaching to the ramparts at the back. The fronts of the houses were whitewashed; the roofs were of straw or reeds; and shops, where they existed, were projections from the main building. The floor on the ground story was the natural soil, well rammed down, and covered with rushes. Hearth-stones for fires were in the centre of the room, and, glass being a luxury barely used even by royalty, wooden lattices, or wooden shutters, were the ordinary apparatus for the admission of light and air. The dwellings of the labourers were little better than mud hovels. The conveniences of life were not regarded. Wooden dishes and plates were used, and as forks were unknown and very few knives existed, people when they sat at meals used their fingers as substitutes. The superfluous fat obtained by the slaughter of beasts was converted into home-manufactured candles, and a lump of wood, with a nail at the top, served the purpose of a candlestick. Even with a burgage tenant, his brass pot, and tripod, by which his pot was hung over the fire on the hearth in the middle of the house, were his only cooking utensils, and the furniture of the house was rough, and mostly made on the spot by a carpenter. The retainers of a Norman Baron reposed on rushes in the great hall of the Mansion, and the servants were content with the stables as their usual sleeping place.

As regards local government history is almost silent. There is no known record of an Officer of the Crown having been appointed for its administration during the Anglo-Saxon period. but a Town Court was held before the time of William the Conqueror, and over this court some Officer of the Crown must have presided.† Ipswich being a royal demesne, its chief magistrate was doubtless a Reeve, whose appointment was vested in the King. The Borough included several townships or parishes, and the rights of the King, both in jurisdiction and revenue, were exercised by this Reeve. He had to collect the town dues, prepare a general account of the revenues, and pay to the Sheriff the amount collected. Under his orders every villein on the demesne land was bound to do a certain amount of work for his master, generally two or three days in the week throughout the year, with an extra day at harvest time.

* Seebohm's English Village Communities.

† Black Book of the Admiralty.

In the matter of jurisdiction the regulations were exceedingly minute. Twice a year the inhabitants assembled at the "Port-moot" to present themselves before the Sheriff to prove that they were duly enrolled in a tithing of ten persons. This was called the view of Frank-pledge. Every landless man, even in the time of Eadgar, was required to have a surety, who was bound to produce him in case of litigation and answer for him if he was not forthcoming. At a later period men were bound to combine themselves in associations of ten. Each association had a head man, who was a "capital pledge." If one broke the law the other nine had to hold him to right. If they could not produce him, the capital pledge, with two of his brethren, had to purge his Association of all complicity in the flight of the criminal, or make good the mischief he had done. The Borough Court, similar in its organization to the Court Baron, was composed of the burgesses—the owners of land or houses for which they paid rent to the King. This court, over which the Reeve presided, tried all cases of debt or damage, and disputes as to ownership within the Borough. The town was divided into four "leets," named after the cardinal points of the compass, and a Court-leet, over which the Reeve presided, tried petty criminal offences and made bye-laws, regulating almost everything in streets, market, or the common fields, and punished offenders. In both these Courts the burgesses formed, as it were, a jury, but they examined no witnesses, and decided the cases brought before them according to their own knowledge of the facts. There was no statute law or common law to be explained, but if they decided wrongly they might be fined for their mistake. A fine appropriate to the offence, or the crime committed, was the usual punishment. Homicide, wounding, assault, or lawless violence were expiated by a fine, proportioned to the status of the injured person, and that status was determined by his property. The fines and the fees payable were collected by the Reeve, as part of the revenue of the King.

We have seen that the fee farm rent of the town was raised considerably by William the Norman, and that the burgesses, greatly reduced as they were in numbers, suffered much from the extra tax which the Conqueror imposed. This grievance, however, decreased yearly as the vacant burghage tenements were filled up by the Norman followers of the Conqueror, who shared in the burdens of the town. This settlement of the Normans led to increased trade, and as the English and Normans intermarried and became fused, the inhabitants began to aspire to independence as a corporate body. The Sheriff, on behalf of the King, had the right to levy taxes on the inhabitants for the support of his royal master, and could appear whenever he pleased at the Borough Courts to collect the fines and profits. Prior to the granting of a Charter, there are several notices on the Pipe Rolls of money from Ipswich, paid to the Exchequer by the Sheriff of Suffolk and Norfolk: thus—Pipe Roll, 31 Henry I., "The Sheriff renders account of £7 of aid from the burgh of Ipswich;" again, Pipe Roll, 5 Henry II., "The Sheriff renders account of 100 shillings, the gift of the burgh of Ipswich."

To get rid of this interference of the Sheriff in the management of their affairs had been the aim of the chief men in rising towns for a long period. The efforts of the Ipswich burgesses, at an earlier age, to free themselves from the country districts for taxation purposes, and have a definite sum levied on the town as a fixed rent, mark their first step in the struggle for municipal liberty. As the Reeve collected and the Sheriff received this fixed amount, they were suspected of enriching themselves at the expense of the people. At this period the institution of a Guild forced its way into prominence, and merchants banded themselves together to acquire privileges which individual effort could not obtain. The growth of local industry helped the movement. Foreign weavers discovered the value of English wool; the gold of Flanders found its way into the pockets of Ipswich traders. The burgesses, thus enriched, resolved to purchase permission to govern themselves. In this they were stimulated by the fact that the Confederates of the Hanse, or Guild Merchants, had laid down a rule that there should be admitted to the league no town which did not exercise corporate jurisdiction.

Charters were granted to some towns by Henry II., but several of them only confirmed old privileges and prescribed no form of municipal constitution. Applications from Ipswich for self-government may have been made, but there is no proof thereof before the time of Richard the Lion-hearted. On the Pipe Roll, 4 Richard I., the Sheriff of Suffolk returns that the men of Ipswich owe 60 Marks for having their liberties; and in the Pipe Roll, 6 Richard I., the Sheriff returns that the men of Ipswich have paid 60 Marks for having the town in their own hands by an increase of 100s. a year on their former "ferm" for confirmation by the King of their liberties. The money was paid but the Charter did not come. When John ascended the throne the merchants renewed their efforts, and this monarch, with kingly shrewdness, complied with their wishes, but, disregarding the payment to his brother, exacted another forty marks for the grant. The Charter is enrolled on the Charter Roll, 2 John, and dated "Apud Rupen Aurivall" 25th May, "in the second year of our reign." Clarke and Wodderspoon are in error in stating that the charter was given in the *first* year of King John's reign. It is amusing to see how Clarke in his "History of Ipswich" exulted over the grant by King John, as though the King had singled out Ipswich for an extraordinary favour. The historian might easily have ascertained that in John's days the King's treasury was often at so low an ebb that anything could be obtained for money. The Pipe Roll shows that the men of Ipswich paid for their privileges before the Charter was dated. No fewer than seventy-seven Charters were granted by John. Evidently this was an easy way of raising money.

In those mediæval times a Charter was of greater value than we can fairly appreciate. Through it the town assumed a distinct position, and was placed on a level with the shire. Through it the people of Ipswich exchanged their Crown-appointed Provost for two Bailiffs of their own choice, and these magistrates exercised both civil and criminal jurisdiction. Through it the Bailiffs negotiated directly with the officers of the Exchequer as to the amount which their community should subscribe to the royal aid, and by assessing it equally among the inhabitants, the town was freed from official tyranny and oppression. The town was granted in fee farm to the burgesses for ever, the Bailiffs having to collect the dues and pay the rent into the King's Exchequer. The burgesses were not to be called before any court outside the limits of the town, were to have no person quartered upon them without their consent, nor to have anything taken from them by force, and were exempted from tolls and mercantile dues throughout the kingdom. This was a great privilege in the twelfth century as dues on importations were imposed at every port. The trading class moreover obtained their desired legal standing, by having granted to them the right to have a "a Merchants' Guild and their own house."

The burgesses having obtained their Charter, lost no time in acting upon it. It was granted in May; in June the inhabitants were summoned to meet in the burial ground of St. Mary at the Tower, to elect two Bailiffs and four Coroners, in accordance with its provisions. The burgher life of the town gathers round the Church of St. Mary at the Tower. Its yard was probably the spot on which "Port-moots" were held in the Saxon age. After a corporation was formed it exercised a certain control over that church. One of its bells was from the earliest times used to toll the "curfew," and the Corporation Lecturer, who as well as the bell ringers was paid by that body, exhorted the people from the pulpit of the church.

The Bailiffs and the Coroners having been elected, the inhabitants met again on the following Sunday, in the same churchyard, to elect twelve Portmen. Most of the public business in that age was transacted on Sundays, and churchyards were selected as the place of meeting, because the witnesses to the proceedings would be numerous, through the people flocking in large numbers to church. There was a motley assembly on this memorable Sunday, when the people congregated to rejoice over the success of a long struggle for corporate rights and privileges. By the costumes of the crowd the distinction of classes was made clear. When the elected Portmen had sworn that they would faithfully maintain all the liberties of the

Borough as granted by the Charter, and justly act in the government of the town to the poor as well as the rich, without respect of persons, the spectacle was impressive. Youth and age, the gentleman and the craftsman, the merchant and the weaver, stood bare-headed on a hot summer's day, in the midst of God's acre, with the canopy of heaven only as the dome of their temple. They cried as with one voice that they would in every way aid in governing the town according to their newly-granted privileges, and stretched forth their hands towards the gospels in token of an oath.

As soon as the corporate body was fully constituted, and William Goscalc made Alderman of the Guild, the landed gentry of the neighbourhood became anxious to share the privileges of the Borough. Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, entered the ranks of the free burgesses in order that he and his villeins should, in the purchase and sale of corn, be free of town duties. Lord Robert de Vaux was made one of the Guild in order that he and his villeins at Wenham should be free of toll. The Priors of Holy Trinity and St. Peter having been elected, came in open court and swore that they would be at scot and lot as resident burgesses. At a later period, the Lord John de Tudenham, the Lord John de Stratton, Hugh de Gosbeck, Robert de Henley, Richard de Holbrook, the Lord Hugh Tollemache, John de Belstead, and others, became burgesses by the payment of small annual donations to the Guild Feast, in order that they and their villeins should be free of toll. This Charter was, and remained, the foundation of the chief municipal rights in the Borough until 1835. Its charter privileges, however, did not prevent it from being treated somewhat similarly to a copyhold tenant. To every succeeding King or Queen the burgesses had, on his or her accession, to pay a sum of money to have their Charter confirmed or inspected. This confirmation or inspection, generally speaking, meant fresh taxes or penalties. Some additional privileges were granted to the people of Ipswich by succeeding monarchs, but the alterations, with one exception, need not detain us. The exception came directly after the Puritan era, when the burgesses felt the power of despotism.

In 1665 Charles II., by writ of Privy Seal, dated Westminster, 17th of February, for a fine of 20 marks, confirmed all charters and grants previously made to the Corporation, supplementing them with such other liberties and privileges as were deemed expedient for the better government of the Borough. With reference to this ratification by Charles II. Mr. Batley says, "It appears, from the letters of the Recorder and Solicitor who conducted the application to the King, that the Lord Chancellor was prevailed upon by the High Steward of the Borough to withdraw a clause out of the new grant, as prepared by the Attorney General, in which the approbation of His Majesty was needed whenever a High Steward, a Recorder, or a Town Clerk was appointed."*

Mr. Sicklemore, the Recorder, was paid £25, and afterwards received a gratuity of £50, for his trouble in connection with this Charter.

Even thus early in the reign of Charles II., the right of the burgesses to elect their officers was preserved in the new Charter only by the influence of the High Steward, the Earl of Suffolk, who was also Lord Lieutenant of the County. Some years later (1685), the King, or his ministers, determined to carry out the idea broached in 1655. Owing to intimidation on the part of the Government, the burgesses agreed to petition the King to accept an unconditional surrender of their old Charters, at the same time soliciting him to grant a new one. This surrender having been accepted, His Majesty incorporated the burgesses *de novo*, by granting a Charter which limited the power of appointment. Persons were appointed by name to fill the chief offices of the Corporation. Thus Sir Henry Felton, bart., and John Burrough, gent., were named as the first two Bailiffs, and Christopher Milton, Recorder. All the Portmen were named, and the Common Council was to consist of the Bailiffs, Portmen, and Chief Constables for the time being, or greater part of them. Having deprived the freemen of their right of electing, it followed that the King retained in his own hands the power of

* Batley MS.S.

removing any member of the Corporation by Order of Privy Council. The changes made in the Corporation show that the Royal prerogative was frequently used.

This Charter continued in force until the 17th October, 1688, when, by Order in Council, the rights and liberties of the Corporation were restored, and they continued in operation until 1835, when the Municipal Corporations Act was passed. Under this Act we live to-day.

In conclusion, a word as to the old Corporation. It had considerable revenues derived from farms and parcels of land, exclusive of the Charity farms, from town dues at the quay, from anchorage or port dues, from fines in judicial affairs, and from petty rents. The revenues thus derived were applied to the payment of the fee farm rent and the salaries of the Corporation officers. When in 1834 the Municipal Commissioner came to investigate the Corporation affairs, he found the Corporation property charged with a heavy debt, the history of which was involved in much obscurity. The interest on this debt absorbed a large proportion of the income, but the total expenditure of the Corporation could not be ascertained.

A rate, called the Marshalsea rate, was made at the Borough Sessions, and levied on the inhabitants. It was similar to a County rate and destined to the same kind of objects, viz., the repair of bridges, roads, &c.

The meetings of the Corporation were of two kinds, Great Court and Assembly. The Great Court was a meeting at which all acts binding on the Corporation were done. It consisted of the two Bailiffs, two or more of the Portmen, two or more of the Common Councillors, and an indefinite number of freemen of the Borough. The corporate officers were appointed at these meetings, including the Members of Parliament, and the freedom of the Borough could only be taken up at a Great Court. The only days fixed for holding it were the 8th and the 29th of September, but the Bailiffs had power to call a meeting at any time. All freemen of the Borough, although not resident in it, could vote at Great Court, whether for Bailiffs or Members of Parliament, for granting the lease of a farm, or the payment of a bill for the repair of Corporation property; and at contested elections enormous expenses were incurred by bringing freemen from all parts of the kingdom to vote. When in Official Costume the Bailiffs were attired in scarlet gowns trimmed with fur, the Portmen in scarlet gowns trimmed with black velvet, and the Common Councillors were robed in gowns of dark purple.

The "Assembly" was more like a standing committee for investigating and considering any matter of interest to the Corporation, and reporting thereon to the Great Court. It was composed of one or more Bailiffs, some of the Portmen, and some of the Common Councillors, and was convened by the Bailiffs as occasion might require.

Evidence in favour of the Saxon origin of the town may be found in the fact that the burgesses were summoned to attend a Great Court by the old Saxon custom of blowing a horn at midnight. The Crier performed this duty in several parts of the town, and particularly in front of the residences of the Bailiffs, Portmen, and some of the Common Councillors, proclaiming that a Great Court would be held at such a day and hour. The horn, which is said to have been used for this purpose from the days of King John, is yet in the possession of the Corporation.

The freedom of the Borough was acquired by inheritance and apprenticeship, or gift. The right by birth devolved only on those children born after the father's admission. By apprenticeship, a seven years' service to a burgess; the service being duly proved. In cases of gift it was granted by the burgesses at large in Great Court, and was unfettered by conditions.

The Portmen and Common Councillors were self-elected bodies. The former were all Whigs and the latter all Tories, and the partisanship shown by these political rivals did not add to the harmony of the Corporate body.

THE END.

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ERRATA.

- Page 52, line 10, for "919" read "991," and see note, page 77.
- „ 54, line 8, for "supporters" read "sub-porters."
- „ 54, line 16, for "imports" read "imported."
- „ 54, line 49, leave out "within those limits."
- „ 77, in foot note, for "Pilologically" read "Philologically."
- „ 84, line 5, after "under this Act" add "amended and consolidated."

MAR 27 1992

